THE STRUCTURE OF JEREMIAH 4:5-6:30

A Thesis Submitted

to the Biblical Studies Faculty

of Asbury Theological Seminary

In Partial Fulfillment of the Degree

Masters of Art in Biblical Studies

Approved by:

by

Joseph Michael Henderson

April 1996

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CHARTS

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background

The Need for a New Approach

Readers who attempt to find structure in the book of Jeremiah are not given much encouragement by the scholarly interpreters. In the introduction to his commentary on Jeremiah, John Bright prepares his readers to find a "hopeless hodgepodge thrown together without any discernible principle at all."[1] The idea that this is a mere first impression is dispelled by William McKane, who spent decades poring over the minute details of the ancient texts of Jeremiah. Speaking from this experience, he attempts to dissuade over-zealous newcomers: "The exploration of supposed, larger, cumulative, literary entities will not repay the labour."[2] For future structure seekers, these veterans have posted a warning at the gate of the book: "Abandon hope, all ye who enter here."[3]

In the face of these warnings, those who persist in searching for structure should be able to point to the differences in their

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[1] *Jeremiah,* vol. 21 of *The Anchor Bible* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1965), lvi.

[2] *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Jeremiah,* vol. 1. International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1986), lxxiv.

[3] "Inferno," III. ix.

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approach that might allow it to succeed where previous approaches have failed. The traditional approach to the poetry of Jeremiah (including 4:5-6:30 which will be investigated here) focuses on authorship, dating, and composition. The poetry is thought to be composed primarily of the authentic oracles of Jeremiah. They derive from Jeremiah's speeches publicly delivered in the years before the fall of Jerusalem (in 597 BC) which they predict. The present literary form results from the collecting and recording of Jeremiah's speech by scribes like Baruch. In terms of composition, the speeches (or speech fragments) are taken to be short, and their arrangement is understood to be thematic. This understanding is evident in the traditional designation of Jeremiah 4:5-6:30 as "The Foe Cycle."

This traditional understanding of the passage gives little hope for finding structure in Jer 4:5-6:30. The highest level of structure that it would support would be equivalent to the "structure" of marbles thrown into one bag because they are the same color. Because the negative evaluation of the structure is inherent in the understanding of the poetry's origin and composition, a new approach to finding structure must begin with a new understanding of the nature of the passage.

A New Approach

An unbiased reading of Jeremiah 4:5-6:30 reveals three features that point to an alternative reading. First, the passage is in poetry. This suggests literary artistry; in fact, poetic form is a conventional way of signaling that a speech is artificially crafted, rather

than naturally occurring, speech. Second, the passage is presented as the speeches of relatively distinct speakers. This suggests drama. Third, there is evidence in the passage of a temporal progression of the events referred to. This suggests narrative. Taken together these features suggest that rather than being a collection of historical speeches, the passage may actually be a literary composition.[4] This new understanding gives ample reason to expect the passage to exhibit intentional structure.

Objective

This study will attempt to analyze the structure of Jeremiah 4:5-6:30 on the basis of understanding the passage as a unified literary creation. Although this new understanding will be clarified and defended along the way, the basic approach will be to simply assume it as a working hypothesis. If the resulting structural analysis is judged to be credible, coherent, and useful for interpretation, it will lend credence to the literary understanding.

Method

The method for analyzing the structure of the passage will simply be to divide the passage into component units and then describe the relationships between them. This method is suggested by Robert Traina's *Methodical Bible Study*,[5] which describes a systematic approach to describing the structure and contents of any

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[4] The reason these features have not been interpreted signs of literary creation will be examined in the following chapter.

[5] Self-published, 1952.

text. A similar method is urged by James Muilenburg.[6] Muilenburg's "rhetorical criticism" emphasizes the importance of delimiting units, and his special interest in poetic devices make his work relevant to the literary analysis attempted here.

The literary understanding of the passage dictates that the units to isolated be literary units and that the relations between them be literary relations. The specific kinds of literary units and relations in Jer 4-6 were discovered through an inductive process of multiple readings of the passage in English and Hebrew.[7] The findings of this process are apparent in the outline of this study. After a chapter on the previous approaches to the passage (ch. 2), the analysis begins by breaking down the passage into its basic components. First there is a dramatic analysis, which attempts to isolate units on the basis of speaker (ch. 3). Second there is a rhetorical analysis, which attempts to delimit units by locating their introductions and conclusions (ch. 4). Once the units have been identified, they are grouped into sections on the basis of narrative, logical, and rhetorical connections. These sections are related on the basis of similar dramatic presentations and an overarching temporal progression (ch. 5). The study concludes with a considerations of the relation of Jer 4-6 to its context (chs. 2-10) and of the contribution of the structural analysis to the interpretation of the passage (ch. 6).

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[6] "Form Criticism and Beyond," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 88 (1969): 1-18.

[7] Hereafter, "Jer 4-6" will serve as an abbreviation for "Jeremiah 4:5-6:30."

Presuppositions

The new literary approach of this study raises questions about the veracity of the passage and about the value of historical approaches. First it can be said that understanding the passage as a literary portrayal of history rather than a collection of historical speeches does not mean that the passage is not true--only that it bears a different relationship to the historical events. Suppose that *Henry V* was commonly read as the records of a fifteenth-century war reporter. If someone were to argue that the text made more sense as the creation of a sixteenth-century playwright, the argument would not necessarily involve denying that Henry defeated the French at Agincourt (either as a basis for the argument or as its conclusion). The argument would be about the type of presentation not the truth of the presentation. However, if the dramatic reading were proved to be correct, then truth would be on its side. The old historical argument could be held responsible for promoting untruths such as the notion that people in Henry's day regularly spoke in iambic pentameter. (As it will be shown in the next chapter, this laughable idea is quite close to the traditional explanation of prophetic poetry.)

The resistance to the literary interpretation is easier to understand when it is considered that book of Jeremiah is the only record of the life of the prophet (unlike the case of King Henry). Identifying a major part of it is a dramatic portrayal rather than a record of historical speeches represents a real historical loss. This study hopes to offer a unified literary creation as a concession for the historical loss. In any case, the final judgment of the nature of the passage should not be based on how well it serves historical or literary

purposes, but how the textual evidence can best be explained. When this is decided, the reader must take the text as it is--not as what he wishes it were.

This consideration leads to the question of the value of historical study. In light of the literary interpretation of the text, is historical study still valuable? First it should be said that the literary theory has only just been suggested, and until it is proved (which is likely to be never), the argument for the historical reading should continue to be made in its most convincing form. Second, even if the literary reading were accepted, there would still be work for historical study. The old work of determining the origins or composition of the speech would be less important. The important work would be to make clear what the artist was portraying. At the bare minimum, this would involve historical study of Hebrew vocabulary and syntax. But it would surely also involve determining all that could be known about the referents of the text, and the conventions and forms it employs.

Limitations

This study focuses on the literary structure of Jeremiah 4:5-6:30. There will be no extended consideration of Biblical and extra-Biblical parallels. Nor will there be much consideration of composition, historical reference, or theology (though a few implications for those approaches will be suggested in the conclusion). The structural analysis will not deal much with elements shorter than a verse in length; thus textual analysis will only be brought in where it is

necessary for understanding the larger structure.[8] Citations of the text will be taken from the Revised Standard Version with bracketed emendations.[9]

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[8] Two critical commentaries have been especially helpful for textual analysis: McKane, *Commentary on Jeremiah,* and William Holladay, *Jeremiah,* Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1986-9).

[9] New York: Thomas Nelson, 1952. The RSV translation of יהוה as "The LORD" will be emended to Yahweh. Using a personal name for the God of Israel is closer to the original meaning of the text. It also fits better with the dramatic presentation attempted here: conversations between two persons named Jeremiah and Yahweh sounds more like a drama than conversations between the prophet and "The LORD."

CHAPTER 2

PREVIOUS APPROACHES

Traditional Answers to Three Questions

In the introduction it was proposed that the alternative to the traditional approach is indicated by a simple interpretation of three obvious features of the text: poetic form, interchange of speakers, and temporal progression. If these indications of literary creation are present in the text for anyone to see, then why has traditional scholarship insisted on a non-literary reading? This problem can be addressed by observing the answers traditional scholars have given to three basic questions. What is the significance of the poetic form of Jeremiah 4-6? What is the relationship between the poetry of Jer 4-6 and the historical ministry and message of the prophet? What is the significance of the various voices in Jer 4-6?

Poetry: Artificial or Natural?

What is the significance of the poetic form of Jeremiah 4-6? This question is similar to the famous question raised by a man who finds a watch in the forest. The man realizes that the watch did not come into the forest in the natural way like the flowers and trees. In the same way, ever since poetry has been recognized in the prophetic books, readers have realized that it did not occur naturally like everyday speech does. The analogy of the watch in the forest

suggests that the reason that this poetic speech is unnatural is that it is artificial. Just as the watch betrays the artifice, or craftsmanship, of a watchmaker, poetry reveals the craftsmanship of a poet. A poet carefully crafted language to construct something (a poem) that would provide a certain kind of experience for whoever heard it (or read it). This is the answer that will be pursued in this study. However, it is not the only answer.

In the case of biblical poetry, the man who found the watch was Bishop Robert Lowth. In the mid-eighteenth century, Lowth delivered a series of Oxford lectures on Hebrew poetry.[1] In these lectures, he introduced the technique of parallelism, which is the primary characteristic of biblical poetry. His discovery of parallelism led to his recognition of a large body of poetry in the prophetic books. Thus one of his main contributions to biblical studies was his idea that the prophet is a poet.

Outside of biblical studies, Lowth's greatest contribution was his idea that the poet is a prophet. The same lectures that introduced parallelism and prophetic poetry to biblical studies, were also the most comprehensive description of poetry in Lowth's day. They represent the defining statement of an idea known as "Oriental primitivism," which was perhaps the most important source for the Romantic theory of poetry expounded by poets like Wordsworth, Shelley, and Coleridge in the nineteenth century.[2] Lowth's influence is especially obvious in his emphasis on inspiration, or what he

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[1] *Lectures on the Sacred Poetry of the Hebrews*, 2nd ed., (London: Ogles, Duncan, and Cochran, 1816).

[2] Hepworth, Brian. *Robert Lowth*. (Boston: Twayne, 1978).

termed "sublimity." For him, prophecy and poetry were both the result of this "force of composition, whatever it be, which strikes and overpowers the mind, which excites the passions, and which expresses ideas at once with perspicuity and elevation."[3] Not much separates Lowth's definition from Wordsworth's famous definition of good poetry as "the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings." The poet in these theories is not a craftsman, but a visionary, a sensitive soul, or in a favorite romantic image, an finely-tuned Aeolian harp blown upon by the wind.

At the beginning of the present century of scholarship, the Romantic theory of biblical prophecy was given additional force by ideas from comparative religions and psychology. Form critics like Gunkel, Gressman, and Schmidt laid particular stress on the relations between early Israelite prophecy and divination and ecstasy, and on the relations between the "secret experiences of the prophets" and mental illness. It is interesting to observe how Gunkel explained the techniques of poetry in terms of these secret experiences. He gives this explanation of meter:

> The prophets who received their ideas in times of exalted inspiration and uttered them under the influence of over-flowing emotion, could only speak in poetic rhythm.[4]

For poetic imagery, allusiveness, and obliquity, Gunkel gives this explanation: "In mysterious times of ecstasy, [revelations] appeared

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[3] *Lectures*, 307.

[4] "The Israelite Prophecy from the Time of Amos," *Twentieth Century Theology in the Making*, vol. I, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan, (New York: Collins, 1969), 66.

obscure and shadowy before the soul of the prophet."[5]   In ordinary appreciations of poetry, readers might attribute poetic techniques like meter and imagery to the conscious effort and learned skill of an artist.   Gunkel re-explains all these indications of artifice as the natural emissions of a fevered mind.

Whether or not the Romantic or ecstatic explanation of poetry is valid, it undermines efforts to look for structure in poetic passages like Jer 4-6.   The products of ecstasy or violent emotion are likely to be fragmentary and disordered.   Gunkel recognizes this when he writes that prophetic perception "does not form a coherent and self-contained whole, but consists of sudden illumination like lightning."[6] This theory gives no reason to look for structure, and what is more, it explains away the evidence of intentional artistic craftsmanship which might produce structure.

Poetry: Portrayal or Product?

The second question: what is the relationship between the poetry of Jer 4-6 and the historical ministry and message of the prophet?   This question is usually understood in terms of the *degree* of relationship.   Either the text bears a close relationship with the history (i.e., it is accurate), or it bears little relationship with the history (i.e., it is inaccurate).   However, another way of understanding the question is in terms of the *kind* of relationship. Returning to the man in the forest, first consider him finding the tracks of an animal.   The tracks seem to have been made by thin

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[5] Ibid., 69.

[6] Ibid., 71.

cloven hooves, and the man guesses the animal was a deer. Next consider him finding a child's stuffed animal. On its head are two branched appendages that suggest antlers; so the man guesses the animal is a deer. Both the tracks and the stuffed animal suggest a deer to the man, but for different reasons. The tracks are natural evidence of a deer. The stuffed animal is a designed representation of a deer. The first is a product of the deer, the second is a portrayal. Now, is the book of Jeremiah a product of the prophet's life, or a portrayal of the prophet's life?

An examination of Jeremiah scholarship in light of this question reveals a surprising answer. By and large, scholars have treated the book's poetry as a product and its prose as a portrayal.[7] The poetry is treated as the fragmentary remains of Jeremiah's actual message and ministry, like shards of pottery turned up in an archeological dig. Scholars attempt to correlate this evidence with fixed historical events or they attempt to identify its subject matter with what is known about the contemporary social and political order. The purpose of this reconstruction is to provide information about Jeremiah's life, his opinions, and his times. The prose on the other hand is treated as an ideological portrayal. To understand it the reader must

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[7] For a discussion of the relation of the poetry to the prose see the following: John Bright, *Jeremiah*, vol. 21 of *The Anchor Bible* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1965), lv-lxxxv; J. A. Thompson, *The Book of Jeremiah,* The New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980), 27-49; William L. Holladay, *Jeremiah* 2, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1989), 11-14; Brevard S. Childs, *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979), 339-54; J. L. Crenshaw, "A Living Tradition: The Book of Jeremiah in Current Research," *Interpretation* 37 (1983): 117-29; Leo G. Perdue, "Jeremiah in Modern Research: Approaches and Issues," in *A Prophet to the Nations: Essays in Jeremiah Studies*, eds. L.G. Perdue and B.W. Kovacs (Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 1984), 1-32.

try to determine the intentions of the writers. The writers might intend to portray the conflict between true and false prophecy, or the people's rejection of God's word, or the suffering of a righteous individual. While the prose is treated as a literary portrayal of the prophet, poetry is treated as the collected remains of Jeremiah's speech.

This understanding of the poetry may be due, in part, to a simplistic interpretation of the first-person references to Jeremiah in the poetry. It is also likely that the Romantic theory of poetry contributed to the idea that poetry was the product of Jeremiah. If poetry is the result of ecstasy, it is easier to imagine an ecstatic prophet than an ecstatic storyteller. Whatever its sources, the idea that the poetry preserves the authentic words of Jeremiah received its definitive statement in the source-critical evaluation of the book.

The understanding of poetry and prose as different sources was first laid out the 1901 commentary of Bernhard Duhm.[8] Duhm limited the authentic words of Jeremiah to poetry cast in the *qinah* (lament) meter. Later sources, he believed, were carelessly added by pious groups working in the context of the post-exilic synagogue. Although his metrical theory gained little support, the idea that division between poetry and prose was a division between earlier and later sources has become axiomatic in modern studies. The dominant issue of these studies has been the relationship between the sources

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[8]Bernhard Duhm, *Das Buch Jeremia,* Kürzer Hand-Commentar zum Alten Testament (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1901).

Duhm identified. The three sources were modified and labeled by Mowinckel:[9]

Type A: poetic oracles

Type B: personal-historical narratives

Type C: prose sermons.

(Notice how the designation "poetic oracles" connotes the interpretation of the poetry as the authentic words of the prophet.) Scholarly interest and debate has focused on the prose material in Types B and C which is often related to the Deuteronomists. The debate is over how accurately the prose portrays Jeremiah's life and message. In this debate, the poetry often serves as the yardstick of authenticity: the prose is assumed to be accurate to the degree it is in accordance with the poetry. This has the effect of reinforcing an unexamined acceptance of the authentic nature of the poetry.

The assumption of authenticity has been strengthened by the association of the poetry with the scroll Jeremiah dictated to Baruch and with the early career of the prophet. In chapter 36, the scroll is said to contain all the words that God has spoken to Jeremiah against Israel, Judah, and the nations from the beginning of his ministry until the fourth year of Jehoiakim (c. 604). Chapter 1, dates the beginning of the ministry to the thirteenth year of Josiah (c. 627), and chapter 25 gives the time between the two dates as twenty-three years. There are very few prose accounts which are dated to these years. The earliest account is the temple sermon (chapters 7,

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[9] Sigmund Mowinckel, *Zur Komposition des Buches Jeremia* (Kristiana: J. Dybwad, 1914). These categories were perhaps most widely known through the work of Wilhelm Rudolph. *Jeremia,* 3rd ed., Handbuch zum Alten Testament, (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1968).

26) dated in the beginning of the Jehoiakim's reign (c. 609). This leaves a gap of almost twenty years in Jeremiah's early career.

The questions of the contents of the scroll and the details of Jeremiah's early career are addressed in almost every modern commentary in introductory sections on the composition of the book and the life of the prophet. The sections on composition usually discuss the observations of Duhm and Mowinckel with special consideration of the problem of the Deuteronomistic prose. The sections on the life of the prophet usually give suggestions about the early ministry of the prophet based on an interpretation of the poetry in chapters 1-25. Thus they directly address the question of this section: what is the relationship between the poetry and the historical ministry and message of the prophet?

The classic attempt to answer this question is John Skinner's 1922 work, *Prophecy and Religion*.[10] Skinner presents Jeremiah's career as the high point of the prophetic movement because of his discovery of personal religion. Thus his study traces the development of Jeremiah's thinking through his gradual disillusionment with the outer forms of religion: the Deuteronomistic reform of Josiah, the official cult of priests at the Jerusalem temple, and the professional prophets who back the priesthood and monarchy. Once Jeremiah had severed all his ties with outward religion, he was left utterly alone in his relationship with God. This situation propelled Jeremiah into the closest personal relationship with God known since Moses. The evidence of this personal relationship is recorded in the "confessions" of

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[10] *Prophecy and Religion,* (Cambridge: University, 1922).

Jeremiah which "embod[y] the transition from the prophet to the Psalmist."[11]

For the interpretation of poetry, the significance of Skinner's presentation is that the whole process of personal development he describes takes place during the twenty years of Jeremiah's early ministry and the evidence for it is all drawn from the poetry of chapters 1-25 What enabled Skinner to construct this biography from a mass of undated poetry? First, he had a convincing developmental story-line which served as a strong backbone. Second, he was able to bind pieces of poetry to this story with a remarkable series of historical hypotheses. These include his association of the foe from the north with the Scythian invasion mentioned in Herodotus, the association of various *torah* passages with Josiah's reform, and the association of idolatry passages with the situation before the reform.[12] Finally, he seems to accept that the poetry is presented in a roughly chronological order. Even so, what is important to notice is that the poems in their present literary context do not tell Skinner's story. They must be given new historical or biographical contexts before they yield the meaning Skinner draws from them.

Many of Skinner's individual historical hypotheses have been dropped by later scholarship (e.g., the Scythian invasion), and the passages he dated before and around the reform of Josiah have generally been moved closer to the end of Josiah's reign of into Jehoiakim's. Still the general principle that the poetry must be

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[11] Ibid., 222.

[12] Ibid., 38-45, 89-107, 59-72 respectively.

understood in relationship to its origin in Jeremiah's life has retained its predominance.

Like Gunkel's theory of the poetry's origin, Skinner's treatment of its relation to Jeremiah life undermines attempts to understand the structure of poetic passages like Jer 4-6. The only possible structure that Skinner could admit is "an order imposed not by the prophet himself but by the editors of his literary remains."[13] However, even this possible order is ignored because, as this quotation implies, what readers want to know about "literary remains" is not what they meant to an unnamed editor who preserved them, but what they meant to the writer who produced them. The consequence of treating the poetry as the product, or evidence, of Jeremiah's life is that interpretation depends on knowing how, when, and why the poetry was produced.

This is why the original question is important: is the poetry a product, like the animal tracks, or a portrayal, like the stuffed animal? In a portrayal, knowledge about the creator or the thing portrayed may be helpful, but what is most important for understanding the portrayal is the material and design of the portrayal itself. If the poetry of Jeremiah were understood as a portrayal, then the primary way to interpret it would be to examine relations of its contents: in other words, its structure. However, the dominance of the "authentic oracles" theory has blocked off this approach to the poetry.

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[13] Ibid., 201.

Speakers: One or More?

The third question: what is the significance of the various voices in Jer 4-6? This question is based on an observation many readers have made about the passage under consideration: parts of the speech seem to be spoken by Yahweh, and other parts seem to be spoken by Jeremiah. To address the significance of this feature of the text, consider for a final time the man in the forest. This time he discovers a text. It is written on three pages and may or may not be part of a larger text. On reading it, he makes two discoveries: first, it is written in poetic form; and second, the speech is presented first in the voice of one person, then another person, then the first again, and so on. Would it be surprising if he concluded that he had found a passage of dramatic poetry? If this conclusion is a natural explanation of the poetry and the interchange of speakers in the man's text, it would seem to be at least a possible explanation of Jer 4-6 which clearly exhibits these two features. It is the possibility that will be considered in this study. However, it has rarely been considered before.

The reason Jer 4-6 has not been read as dramatic poetry is because it is interpreted as authentic prophetic speech. This interpretation provides alternative explanations for the features which would naturally explained as poetic or dramatic. The way that Gunkel and others explained poetry as the result of ecstasy has been shown in the preceding discussion. Now it remains to be shown how the various voices have been explained in terms of messenger speech. The basic idea of messenger speech is that whenever

Yahweh seems to speak, it is actually the prophet speaking in the role of a messenger.

The main proponent of the messenger interpretation is Claus Westermann who defended the idea in his book *Basic Forms of Prophetic Speech.*[14] In this book, he takes on the form-critical task of determining the basic or original form of prophetic speech. Westermann rejects Gunkel's attempt to find the basic form in the secret experiences of the prophets. Instead, Westermann looks to the accounts of prophetic speeches in the historical books. (He justifies this choice by noting that the historical books contain accounts of the prophets which predate the earliest prophetic books.) When Westermann examines these prophetic speeches, he discovers that they have a similar function and form. The function, revealed in the formula "Thus says Yahweh," is to deliver a message of Yahweh. The form is a legal judgment consisting of two main parts: an accusation and a announcement of punishment. In all of these observations, Westermann appears to be firm ground.

The problems start when Westermann takes the form he has drawn from the prophetic narratives and tries to apply it to the poetry of the prophetic books. Although Westermann can find elements of his basic form, the complete form fits very few passages. To account for this bad fit, Westermann puts forward a variety of explanations. The central one is that the differences are due to an evolution from judgments against individuals to judgments against

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[14] (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1967). The original, *Grundformen pophetischer Rede,* was published in 1960.

the entire nation.[15] This development resulted in a much freer use of the form. Westermann is forced to describe almost every example of a judgment against the nation in terms of expansions, adaptations, omissions, inversions, and finally the dissolution of the form altogether.[16] This situation might suggest that a new explanation is needed.[17]

One factor that does not figure in Westermann's explanation is the difference between narrative and poetic literature. The prophetic speeches against individuals, from which Westermann drew his basic form, are almost all part of historical narratives. The ill-fitting judgments against the nations are almost all poetic. A plausible explanation of the differences (and the similarities) is that storytellers and historians represent speeches in a different way than poets. The characteristics of the narrative speeches can be explained in terms of the demands of a narrative: the speeches are formulaic in order economically represent prophetic speech; and they are brief so that they will not swamp the story. The longer, freer speeches in poetry might be said reflect a medium in which speeches occur without a narrative context and must therefore convey their meanings by the choice and arrangement of their materials. However, this explanation is not open to scholars like Westermann who

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[15] Westermann does not clearly explain why this change in audience allowed greater freedom in form. His explanation that the events predicted by the judgment against the nation were more distant (*Basic Forms,* 173) is hard to relate to the freer literary form.

[16] *Basic Forms,* 176-188, 205-210.

[17] The difficulty of describing all the animals at the zoo as cows with various expansions, additions, omissions, and inversions might suggest that a "paradigm shift" is in order.

understand the poetic (as well as the prose) speeches as authentic records rather than as literary portrayals.

Westermann's understanding of poetry as authentic prophetic speech is what makes him insist on the interpretation of Yahweh's speech as messenger speech. He defends this interpretation on the basis of the "messenger formula"--the phrase "thus says Yahweh" (כה אמר יהוה). This phrase appears in both the prophetic narratives, from which Westermann drew his basic form, and in the poetry of the prophetic books. It is true that in the prophetic narratives the phrase is found in speeches of prophets who are functioning as messengers. However, as it has been argued above, although the poetry and prose have some common elements, their forms are often quite different. These differences in form may indicate differences in function both of the whole speech and of the individual elements. In the case of the so-called "messenger formula," a different function is suggested by the fact that in several occurrences in Jeremiah, the phrase is used to address speeches to Jeremiah (15:19, 30:1-3, 34:1-2) or to the besiegers of Jerusalem (6:6, 9). Is the prophet to be thought of as a messenger to the besiegers and to himself? Other interpretations that fit these uses of the phrase can be suggested. Perhaps they are simply citation markers. In this case, the formal usage, "thus says," may be preferred to the simple form to indicate emphasis or authority. Another possibility is that the phrase is actually part of Yahweh's speech. Its use in portrayals of his speeches would help to give them the tone of a royal pronouncements.[18]

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[18] These possibilities are explained by Samuel Meier along with a thorough critique of Westermann and an in-depth consideration of Ancient

If any of these alternate interpretations of "Thus says Yahweh" were considered, it would open the door to a dramatic understanding of the poetry in which the voices of the Yahweh and Jeremiah could be heard in dialogue. However, once again, the reason that these alternatives have not been considered is the assumption that the poetry is the authentic speech of Jeremiah.

Evaluation

The traditional answers to all three of these questions is determined by the presupposition of authenticity. At the same time, the continued use and defense of these answers serve to reinforce the underlying presupposition. The result is that when readers come to the poetry of Jeremiah, they do not find it fresh like the man in the forest. Instead they find it encased in a critical frame that dictates how it should be read.

This review of traditional criticism has attempted to show why the old assumptions prevent the reader from understanding the structure of the poetry of Jeremiah. The ecstatic theory of poetry provides no reason to expect structure and explains away the indications of a artistically structured work. The conception of the poetry as the literary remains of Jeremiah understands the poems as collection of evidence rather than components of a unified portrayal. If they are a collection of evidence then their present arrangement of the pieces is not as important as where they came from. Similarly, the messenger theory makes them a collection of messages whose

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Near Eastern parallels. *Speaking of Speaking: Marking Direct Discourse in the Hebrew Bible,* (New York: E J Brill, 1992), 273-298.

interpretation depends on when and why they were sent. Additionally, the subordination of Yahweh's speech to the speech of a prophetic messenger takes away the possibility of a unified dramatic dialogue. In light of these obstacles, any attempt to understand the structure of the poetry demands a new approach to its basic nature.

Two Recent Approaches

In the last thirty years, several studies have challenged the old assumptions about the poetry of Jeremiah. These can now be considered to see if they have cleared the way to understanding the structure. The most important of the new studies can be grouped into two approaches: redaction criticism and rhetorical criticism

Redaction Criticism

Redaction criticism of the poetry is an extension of compositional studies into the poetic sections of the which were formally considered authentic. Thus before this work could be done, the redaction critics had to break down the traditional association of poetry with authenticity. In this task, they built on earlier studies like those of Hyatt which challenged the conservative dating of the poetry to events in Jeremiah's early career (e.g., the Scythian invasion).[19] Taking this challenge a step further, they undermined the reliability of the prose framework of poetry. If, as many scholars believed, the prose was a late ideological creation of the Deuteronomists, then why should the study of the poetry be bound by its prose

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[19] "The Book of Jeremiah: Introduction and Exegesis," *The Interpreters Bible* 5 (New York: Abingdon, 1956).

accounts of the early career and the scroll? Instead the poetry could be reexamined for internal evidence of composition.

This attack on the old reading of the poetry has been led by Robert Carroll.[20] In his opinion, the theory of the poetry's authenticity is "dogma [that] cannot be established by argument, [but] can only be believed."[21] Unfortunately, Carroll has not established a new theory to replace the old one. He confesses that his work on Jer. 2-6 represents the weakest part of his work.[22]

In contrast to Carroll's contributions which are primarily iconoclastic, Mark Biddle has offered a thorough redactional study of Jer. 2:1-4:2.[23] Because the material in these chapters is almost all poetry, Biddle could not rely on the old poetry-prose division for distinguishing sources. Instead Biddle identified compositional layers on the basis of perceived shifts in theme and structure and in the number and sex of the audience (m.pl., m.s, and f.s.). Biddle's work has the merits of providing a close reading of the text as well as a fresh presentation of the final form of the text based on his theory of composition. The difficulty of assessing his theory can be summed up by saying that while many readers will find his explanations of the textual phenomenon plausible, few will find them probable.

This situation is even more pronounced in the assessment of William McKane's compositional theories. McKane's two-volume

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[20] *From Chaos to Covenant: Uses of Prophecy in the Book of Jeremiah* (London: SCM Press, 1981) and *Jeremiah* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1986).

[21] *Jeremiah*, 47.

[22] "Radical Clashes of Will and Style: Recent Commentary Writing on the Book of Jeremiah," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 45 (1989): 107.

[23] *A Redaction History of Jeremiah 2:1-4:2* (Zürich: Thelogischer Verlag, 1990).

commentary on Jeremiah is the most comprehensive study ever attempted on the relationship of the ancient texts of Jeremiah.[24] On the basis of his comparisons of the Septuagint and the Masoretic Text, McKane has developed a critical skepticism toward any theories of original of editorial order. His own conception of the composition of the book is of a vast accumulation of brief, local, insertions. In his treatment of individual passages, McKane takes every slight tension or shift in the text as one of these scribal insertions. The result is an extremely fragmentary text.

Studies of the composition of the poetry like those of Carroll, Biddle, and McKane have broken down old assumptions about the origin of the poetry and they have produced a wealth of new observations about the text. However, the wide divergence in their explanations of these observations may leave readers skeptical about the possibility of establishing a new compositional model.

Rhetorical Criticism

The second development in study of the poetry of Jeremiah is the advent of rhetorical criticism. This new critical method was introduced by James Muilenburg's 1968 speech "Form Criticism and Beyond."[25] His challenge was to go beyond form criticism by focusing on the unique artistry and individual intentions of specific passages rather than their conformity to conventional forms. The method suggested by Muilenburg was identifying units of composition on the

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[24] *Jeremiah,* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1986).

[25] Delivered at the annual meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature on December 18, 1968, at the University of California, Berkeley; published in the *Journal of Biblical Literature* 88 (1969): 1-18.

basis of literary devices. (Since that is the main concern of the present study, it could be classified as a rhetorical study.) Fortunately for Jeremiah studies, Muilenburg had a special interest in the book, and two of his students, Jack Lundbom and William Holladay, have contributed major works on the rhetorical analysis of Jeremiah.

Lundbom's work set out to address the problem of unit division in the poetry of Jeremiah.[26] After pointing out the failure of source and form-critical methods to distinguish units, Lundbom proposes a rhetorical approach. His method is the location of two "rhetorical devices": chaismus and inclusio. Thus Lundbom combs the text for patterns of verbal and thematic recurrences, and he finds what he is looking for. He suggests that these devices were the writer's primary means of holding together passages of all sorts and sizes. The difficulty of Lundbom's theory is that it is hard to conceive of hearers or readers who would be able to perceive these recurrences which are often chapters apart. Furthermore, it assumes that hearers would be constantly asking themselves if the words of the speech had some other function than their normal semantic and syntactic functions. Thus for example they came across the word "speech" in the last sentence, they would have to ask if it were meant to recall Muilenburg's speech at the beginning of this section and thus to form an inclusio. This is hard to imagine.

The title of Holladay's work, *The Architecture of Jeremiah 1-20,* indicates that he too is concerned with both poetry and structure.[27]

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[26] *Jeremiah: A Study in Ancient Hebrew Rhetoric, SBL Dissertation Series* 18 (Missoula, Montana: Scholars, 1975).

[27] (Lewisburg: Bucknell University, 1976).

While Lundbom worked with only two rhetorical devices, Holladay observed great variety of devices such as catchwords, assonance, alliteration, and many that Holladay invents himself such as "adjunction by pre-existing association."[28] Some of these are so subtle it is hard to believe they could be intended by the writer or perceived by the reader. Holladay finds not only verbal recurrences, but recurrences of consonant clusters! However, Holladay's scrutiny of the text for any kind of recurrence leads him to observe parallels passages that seem to really be related even if the relationship is not necessarily the subtle "rhetorical" one that Holladay suggests.[29]

Both Holladay and Lundbom are firmly committed to the authenticity of the text. For them the rhetorical subtleties that they observe are indications of the rhetorical skill of Jeremiah or Baruch. They associate this rhetoric with the Deuteronomic preaching in the temple. In his commentaries, Holladay presents a complex theory which dates the poetry according to its inclusion in the first or second edition of the scroll and in relation to public readings of Deuteronomy.[30] This association of Jeremiah with the Deuteronomists strengthens the connections between the historical prophet and the Deuteronomistic prose accounts. Thus the rhetorical critics use their rhetorical theories to bolster the unity and historicity of the book. However since both their rhetorical theory and their historical

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[28]Ibid., 170.

[29] For a thoughful evaluation of Holladay's method see A. R. Diamond, *The Confessions of Jeremiah in Context* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1987), 132-5.

[30] *Jeremiah,* vol. 1.

theories are largely hypothetical neither provides a solid basis for the other.

Evaluation

This survey of the recent trends leaves three impressions. First, there has not been a significant break from the historical approach of the traditional interpretation. The rhetorical critics believe that the speeches cannot be properly understood until they are located in the historical ministry of Jeremiah, and the redactional critics believe the speeches can only be understood in relation to the history of composition and the author and editors who produced the book. Second, these studies of Jeremiah suggest a crisis in credibility. The poetry has been subjected to an intense scrutiny by several authors, and their conclusions are radically divergent. Because of this, none of their conclusions have gained wide-spread acceptance. Third, the two main approaches seem directly opposed to each other. The redaction critics deny authenticity and find the text full of incon- sistencies and tensions, and the rhetorical critics affirm authenticity and find the text full of wonderful coherence.

In spite of these differences, the two approaches can be said to be united in their opposition to the old assumptions. The redaction critics attack the assumption of authenticity and the rhetorical critics attack the assumption of a fragmentary text. These assumptions must be overturned if scholarship is to progress toward under- standing the structure of the text. However the inadequacies of the redactional and rhetorical approaches raise the question if there is a way to move beyond both of these old assumptions at once.

A New Approach

Such a way may be offered by the naive conclusion of the man in the forest. What if the passage is read as what it appears to be? If the passage is read as dramatic poetry, both assumptions are dealt with. First, the passage need not be interpreted as a record of prophetic speech; it can be read as the work of a poet who portrays the speech of the prophet. Second, shifts in content of speaker need not represent a fragmentary text; they can be taken to indicate the dramatic method of an artist portraying dialogue and action. The dramatic approach would attempt to understand the text in terms of literary effects. This has several advantages over the older historical understanding.

Advantages

First, theories of historical origins (i.e., why and how the text was produced) are usually highly speculative. Especially in a literary work, they often depend on reading between the lines or against the grain of a text. Who can know all the motives behind The Odyssey or Paradise Lost? In contrast to this, the evidence for the intended literary effect is almost all present in the text.

Second, the literary reading provides a way of understanding the unity of the text that does not depend on authenticity. On the one hand, the possibility of unity removes the necessity of looking for tensions and inconsistencies which characterizes the redactional approach. On the other hand, the conception of a literary creation takes away the importance of authenticity. Authenticity is what

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gives value to historical documents or literary remains; but how much would it diminish the value of *Hamlet* to find out that it was not by Shakespeare--or to draw a closer parallel, that it was not the authentic record of Prince Hamlet's speech?

Third, basic literary intentions are universal. They may not always be easy to explain, but if they are not felt, then they may not be there. This provides a strict new criterion for establishing the credibility of interpretations: is it likely that a competent audience would perceive these effects? Think of how few of the rhetorical subtleties (e.g., chiasmus) could stand up under this test. If each of the new theories were subjected to this judgment, it might go a long way toward relieving the present crisis in credibility.

Confirmation

This last feature of the dramatic reading raises an important question. If the passage really is dramatic poetry, why have so many interpreters misunderstood it? One answer is that critical presuppositions blinded interpreters to the obvious features of the text. (That is argument of the first half of this chapter). However, another answer is that careful scholars *have* been able to perceive it. In this respect, it is interesting to note how a prominent redactional critic and a prominent rhetorical critic have both recently moved toward this explanation. In a new book, the redaction critic Mark Biddle has suggested that "by analyzing the interplay of the various voices in the book [of Jeremiah] . . . it may be possible to discover the contours

of an extended dialogue."[31]   The substance of his book is an attempt
to identify and characterize the dramatic voices in Jer. 7-20.   Like-
wise in a recent commentary, the rhetorical critic William Holladay
observed about Jer 4-10, "Analysis suggests that the interchange of
speakers plays a role in the poetic structure of the units."[32]   Holladay
accompanies his translations of the poetry with indications of
speakers like those in a dramatic script.   In spite of this agreement
on the literary character of the text, neither critic has surrendered
his historical analysis.   Biddle makes clear that he does not under-
stand the dialogue to be the work of one writer.   For him, the drama
is the cumulative result of the editorial process that is only complete
in its final form.   For Holladay, Jeremiah himself is the dramatist who
uses the ploy of different voices as rhetorical technique in his public
speeches.   Still, these differences do not diminish the significance of
two scholars with divergent methods coming to the same under-
standing of the text.[33]

This chapter has argued that to understand the structure of Jer
4-6, a new approach to the basic nature of the passage is needed.
This new approach should challenge the old assumption of a frag-
mentary text and the old assumption of authenticity that stands
behind it.   Interpreting the passage as dramatic poetry is a clear

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[31] *Polyphony and Symphony in Prophetic Literature,*   (Macon: Mercer
University, 1996), 11.

[32] *Jeremiah,* vol. 1, 137.

[33] Additional support comes from A. R. Diamond's literary analysis of Jer
11-20.   His understanding of the nature of the text is obvious from the subtitle
of his book, "Scenes from a Prophetic Drama" and from the titles to the two
main parts of his book: "Part I: Dramatic Dialogue between Prophet and God,"
and Part II: Dramatic Dialogue--Prophet and God versus Israel" (*Confessions of
Jeremiah*).

challenge to both of these old assumptions. More importantly, this interpretation has a good claim to being the correct explanation of many features of the text. It is the common-sense interpretation of a reader coming to the text for the first time, and it is the independent discovery of scholars like Biddle and Holladay who have freed themselves to some extent from the traditional reading.

CHAPTER 3

DRAMATIC ANALYSIS

Dramatic Speech: Evidence and Illustration

The preceding chapters have laid the foundations for a new approach to Jer 4-6. The idea that the passage can be read as dramatic poetry can now be explored by an examination of the dramatic speeches which provide illustrations and evidence of the dramatic method. A simple understanding of drama is that it involves an author using a voice other than his own. This is a starting point for understanding the nature of dramatic speech, but the concept will be developed and refined as the examination of the passage turns up various types of speech. The examination will begin with passages in Jer 4-6 which are generally recognized as not expressing the thoughts of the author and proceed to passages which are dramatic in a more subtle sense.

Citations Of The Sinful People

One peculiar feature of the book of Jeremiah is the widespread use of quotations of the prophet's opponents. This phenomenon has been the subject of a lively scholarly dialogue. The use of quotation in Biblical poetry was brought to the attention of modern scholars by

the work of Robert Gordis.[1]   In his study of wisdom literature, he contended that when alternate points of view were expressed they were likely to be quotations of opponents rather than redactional insertions.   The prominence of the opposition theme in the book of Jeremiah would suggest that it would be worthwhile to examine it for this kind of quotes.   It is no surprise that one scholar has estimated that Jeremiah contains around a hundred instances.[2]

In Jer 4-6, there are at least three of these quotations of the prophet's opponents:

> 5:12-13   They have spoken falsely of Yahweh, and have said (ויאמרו), "He will do nothing."
>
> 6:14   The have healed the wound of my people lightly saying (לאמר), "Peace, peace," when there is no peace.
>
> 6:16-17   But they said (ויאמרו), "We will not walk in it." . . . . But they said (ויאמרו), "We will not give heed."

Each of these are clearly marked with a verb of speech, and no competent reader could mistake their content for the thoughts of Jeremiah.

There has been some debate over the authenticity of this type of quotations in Jeremiah.   An early study by William Horowitz sought to use these quotations to reconstruct the position of Jeremiah's audience.[3]   He based his study on the belief that the quo-

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[1] "Virtual Quotation in Job, Sumer, and Qumran," *Vetus Testamentum* 3(1981): 410-427 ;   and "Quotations as a Literary Usage in Biblical, Oriental, and Rabbinic Literature,"   *Hebrew Union College Annual* 22 (1949): 157-219.

[2] Thomas Overholt, "Jer 2 and the Problem of 'Audience Reaction,'" *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 41:262-273 (April 1979).   The most exhaustive treatment of these quotation is Ronald E. Manahan, "An Interpretive Survey: Audience Reaction Quotation in Jeremiah," *Grace Theological Journal* 1, no. 2 (1980): 163-183.

[3] "Audience Reaction to Jeremiah," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 32 (1970) 555-64.

tations were "genuine" and had "not been tampered with." In a related book-length study on prophetic conflict, James Crenshaw also maintained that most of the quotations had the "ring of authenticity"; however, he did admit that some were "obvious creations of the prophet himself."[4] In their works on prophecy, both Wolff and von Rad warned that the prophetic quotation was often more concerned with effectiveness than accuracy.[5] A survey of these positions is offered by Overholt. He suggests that there is a continuum of authenticity, "from verbatim through paraphrase to outright fabrication."[6]

The debate over authenticity indicates that these citations are not perceived as dramatic. This perception is not simply due to the historical bias of interpreters who approach the whole passage as historical evidence. Instead the perception is suggested by the passage itself. Each of these citations is followed by a verdict which indicates a legal setting in which are citations brought forward as incriminating evidence. Thus the value of these citations (at least in the legal portrayal) depends on authenticity, not their power to conjure up a dramatic situation or evoke the character of their speakers.[7] These citations illustrate that dramatic speech is more than just using the words of another speaker. In fact, although

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[4] *Prophetic Conflict* (BZAW 124; Berlin, de Guyter, 1971), 34.

[5] Hans Walter Wolff, *Das Zitat im Prophetenspruch* (Munich: Christian Kaiser, 1937) 20-24, 38-51, 74, 78; Gerhard von Rad, *The Message of the Prophets* (New York: Harper and Row, 1965) 55. Both of these are cited in Overholt.

[6] Overholt, 272-3.

[7] If these speeches are understood as representing a prosecutor's speech, then they do function dramatically. They function to evoke the courtroom scene.

drama may borrow speech, its typical method is to create and shape speech to represent a speech, a speaker, and a speech situation. In legal or expository citation, fabrication is a vice; in dramatic portrayal, it is a virtue.

Lady Jerusalem's Cries

Jeremiah 4:31 portrays the pathetic scene of Jerusalem surrounded by destroyers. Jerusalem is personified as Lady Zion (בת־ציון).[8] The destroyers are personified as murderers.

> I heard a cry as of a woman in [birth pangs],
> > anguish as of one bringing forth her first child,
> the cry of [Lady Zion] gasping for breath,
> > stretching out her hands,
> > "Woe is me! I am fainting before murderers."

Who is the speaker of the last line? Nothing prevents identifying the speaker as Jeremiah: it would fit with the point of view expressed elsewhere in his laments. Still it seems more likely that it is spoken by Lady Jerusalem. As Lady Jerusalem is clearly not a real person, it is obvious that this speech was invented by an author; thus it is dramatic.

If the line is identified as the speech of Lady Jerusalem, this is in spite of the fact that it is not introduced by a verb of thought or speech. The citations of the sinful people were introduced with

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[8] This name for Jerusalem should not be translated as "daughter of Zion." (William Stinespring, "No Daughter of Zion: A Study of the Appositional Genitive in Hebrew Grammar," *Encounter* 26 (1965): 136f.) The Biblical writers commonly personify cities and nations in this way. (Mark Biddle, "The Figure of Lady Jerusalem," in *The Biblical Canon in Perspective*, 173-194, ed. Lawson Younger et al. (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellem, 1991)). My translation "Lady Zion" is intended to suggest a kind of national symbol like Uncle Sam or John Bull.

"they said." In this case "she said," or "she cried" might be expected. Even though the quotation is not explicitly marked, it may well be a case of what Michael Fox calls virtually marked quotations.[9] He suggests three criteria for identifying these unmarked quotations:

1) Another speaker is present.
2) A nearby verb or noun implies speech.
3) The person or number of the voice changes.[10]

In the case of Jer 4:31, all three criteria are met. Lady Zion is the other speaker; the twice mentioned "cry" (קוֹל) implies speech; and the change from "she" to "I" is a change in voice. This particular quotation suggests a fourth possible criterion to help identify virtually marked quotes: an attention catching device is used to begin the quote (in this case, an exclamation).

Now that dramatic discourse has been identified and criteria for recognizing it have been laid out, the rest of the passage can be examined for dramatic speech. Although the previous passage is generally recognized as a quotation of Lady Jerusalem, the following passage (Jer 4:19-21) is usually attributed to the prophet.

[My womb, my womb!] I writhe [as in birth pangs].[11]
Oh, the walls of my heart!
   My heart groans to me;
You have heard, O my soul, the sound of the trumpet,
   the alarm of war.
Disaster follows hard on disaster,
   the whole land is laid waste.
Suddenly my tents are destroyed,
   my curtains in a moment.

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[9] "The Identification of Quotations in Biblical Literature," *Zeitschrift für die Alttestamantliche Wissenschaft* 92 No 3, (1980) 422.

[10] Ibid., 423 (summarized in my words).

[11] My translations of מעה and אחולה:

How long must I see the standard,
and hear the sound of the trumpet?

The reason scholars have taken this to be Jeremiah's speech is partly because it fits well with the common idea of Jeremiah as the weeping prophet. But it is also likely that they have not considered any alternatives. They are accustomed to treating any first person passages as the words of Jeremiah (or Jeremiah speaking as a messenger for God) unless the speech is clearly marked otherwise.

However the feminine language in the first line is a fairly strong indication that the speaker is not the prophet, but the personified city (i.e., Lady Jerusalem).[12] The word *me'ah* (מעה) is often translated "womb," and the verb *hul* (חול) used to designate birth pangs.[13] Kimchi glosses *ahulah* (אחולה) as "pain like that of a woman in childbirth"[14] It has the same root as the word used to describe the cry of Lady Jerusalem in 4:31 (קול כחולה: a cry like birth pangs).

Fox's criteria for identifying unmarked quotes provides additional evidence that the speaker of 4:19-21 is Lady Jerusalem. First, she is mentioned in the verses preceding this cry. The section begins "announce to Jerusalem" (4:16), and continues first with Jerusalem as the subject (3 f.s., 4:17), then as the audience (2 f.s., 4:18). Although there is not a noun or verb implying speech, there

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[12]However, see 6:24: ". . . anguish has taken hold of us (m.pl.),/ pain as of a woman in travail." Here a non-feminine speaker employs feminine imagery.

[13]For מעה translated womb see Gen. 25:23, Ruth 1:11, Psa. 71:6, and Isa 49:1. For חול translated as writhing in childbirth see Isa 26:17, 45:10, 51:2.

[14]היל כיולדה quoted in McKane, *Jeremiah* vol. 1 (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1986), 102.

is a change in voice.   The verse preceding the cry (4:18) addresses Lady Jerusalem: "This is your (3 f.s.) doom, . . . it has reached your (3 f.s.) very heart."   To this the cry (4:19) responds, "Oh, the walls of my (1 s.) heart! My (1 s.) heart is beating wildly!" The change in voice is made apparent by the change from "your heart" (לבך) to "my heart" (לבי).   Finally, like 4:31, 4:19 is begun with an attention-getting exclamation.

Perhaps the most convincing evidence that Jer 4:19-21 should be taken as the dramatic speech of Lady Jerusalem is its correspondence to other passages that are even more obviously the speech of Lady Jerusalem.   The parallels with 4:31 have already been pointed out.   Another passage is so closely parallel to 4:19-21 that there is probably some sort of literary dependence.   The parallel passage (10:19-20) presents a cry of distress:

> Woe is me because of my hurt!
>   My wound is grievous.
> But I said, truly this is my affliction,
>   and I must bear it.
> My tent is destroyed,
>   and all my cords are broken;
> My children have all gone from me,
>   and they are not;
> there is no one to spread my tent again,
>   and to set up my curtains

Like 4:19-21, the speech is preceded by a rebuke to a woman (2 f.s.) and followed (as is 4:19-21) with a speech from God, chiding the people for their foolishness.   Also noteworthy is recurrence of refer-

ences to "my tents" (אהלי) and "my curtains" (ריעותי).[15] Thus 10:19-20 and 4:19-21 are remarkably similar in genre, context, and diction.

The language of tents is also used in two passages outside of Jeremiah to describe the fortunes of Lady Jerusalem (Lam 2:4, and Isa 54:2).[16] The reference in 10: 20 to "my children" is a clear indication that the speaker is not the unmarried prophet. It is, in fact, Lady Jerusalem, whose "children" are the inhabitants of the city. The strong ties between 10:19-20 and 4:19-21 strongly suggest that 4:19-21 is also spoken by Lady Jerusalem.[17]

The speech of Lady Jerusalem (in 4:19-21, 31) is a clear example of dramatic discourse. This is because Lady Jerusalem could not possibly have written the speech. Neither is it possible that the speech is a report of something she said. Instead, an author

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[15] Note that both refer to the destruction of the tents (שדדו אהלי in 4:20, אהלי שדד in 10:20). Also note the recurrence of שבר ("disaster" in 4:20 and "hurt" in 10:19).

[16] Lam 2:4 describes the destruction of the "tent of Lady Zion" (בת-ציון אהל). Isa 54:2, speaking to Lady Jerusalem says:

> Enlarge (f.s.) the place of your (f.s.) tent (אהלך)
>> and let the curtains (יריעות) of your habitation
>> be stretched out
> Hold not back, lengthen your cords
>> and strengthen your stakes

This passage represents a reversal of fortune for Lady Jerusalem. The surrounding verses (54:1,3) also promise children to Jerusalem; thus they reverse the situation in Jer 10:20 in which her children "have gone out and are not"

[17] Two other studies which have come to the conclusion that Lady Jerusalem is the speaker of these two speeches are Kenro Kumaki,. "A New Look at Jer 4:19-22 and Jer 10:19-21," *Annual of the Japanese Biblical Institute* 8 (1982): 113-122; and Barabara Bakke Kaiser, "Poet as 'Female Impersonator': the Image of Daughter Zion as Speaker in Biblical Poems of Suffering," *Journal of Religion* 67 (1987):164-82.

invented a speech to *sound like* what a besieged Jerusalem might say. This observation highlights the imaginative or fictive element of dramatic discourse - the element of "as if."

Although the example of Lady Jerusalem's lament is clearly dramatic discourse, it is not necessarily typical. It might mislead someone to think that dramatic speech was fictive by nature of having an imaginary speaker. This is not the case; it is the speech itself which is fictive or artificial. The speakers in the next example of dramatic discourse are not imaginary but historical.

Enemy Battle Orders

In Jer 6:4-5 the text presents the voices of foreign generals ("shepherds" in 6:3) leading an attack on Jerusalem:

> Prepare war against her;
> > up let us attack at noon!
> [Too bad!][18] for the day declines,
> > for the shadows of evening lengthen.
> Up, and let us attack by night,
> > and destroy her palaces!

Most scholars take these verses as a dramatization of an attack on Jerusalem. They portray the frightening determination of the invaders. Missing an opportunity to attack during the day will not stop them: they will even attack at night!

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[18] This is Bright's translation of לנו אוי (literally "Woe to us"). The translation is intended to suggest that this bicola is spoken by the attackers who are expressing frustration at having missed the opportunity to attack at noon (Craige translates the exclamation as "Damn"!). The RSV as well as Holladay prefers to read this bicola as the cry of Jerusalem's inhabitants. Bright, *Jeremiah,* vol. 21 of *The Anchor Bible* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday), 1965 43; Craigie, Kelly, and Drinkard, *Jeremiah 1-24,* Word Biblical Commentary 26 (Dallas: Word Books, 1991), 98; Holladay *Jeremiah,* Hermeneia, vol. 1 (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1986), 206f.

Unlike the fictional Lady Jerusalem, the speakers of these lines were real historical characters. Generals really did lead armies against Jerusalem. However, it is not to be supposed that these lines are an actual "transcript of a council of war."[19] The writer was not a spy with his ear to the general's tent. Instead the writer invented these lines to sound like a council of war. The writer created speech appropriate for the historical speakers and situation in a way similar to the way Shakespeare in his historical plays created speeches to be spoken by the historical characters such as Julius Caesar. This is dramatic discourse. If it is called fictive speech, it should be made clear that it is not necessary that the characters or situation be fictional, only the speech itself.

In dramatic speech, the author crafts the speech in such a way that it *appears* to arise from the historical situation or be spoken by the historical speakers. Thus the relationship of the dramatic speech to the historical situation is just the opposite of the relationship of the actual speech. The actual speech is the product of the historical situation. The dramatic speech portrays the historical situation ("produces" it for the reader). For the actual speech, the historical situation (including the historical speakers and audience) is the context. For the dramatic speech, the historical situation is the subject. To use the example of the battle commands, if the commands are taken as actual speech then they arose from the desire of the generals to take the city. Their function was to set the attack in motion. However, as dramatic speech they were created by an author removed from the situation, and they function to dramatically por-

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[19] McKane, 141.

tray the attack of the city, or the persistent attackers. It seems clear that the speeches in Jer 6:4-5 relate to the historical generals as a portrayal not a product. Now it can be asked what relationships the speeches have to Jeremiah and Yahweh.

Yahweh And Jeremiah As Dramatic Speakers
Objections Answered

The examples discussed above stand out from the rest of the passage because they are not presented as the speech of Jeremiah or God. However, these are the minority in the poetry of the book which is dominated by the first person speech of God and Jeremiah. It can now be asked whether any portion of God's speech or Jeremiah's speech can be understood as dramatic speech. If so, it would be in opposition to the understanding of most of the scholarly work on the book which treats the poetry as the oracles Jeremiah delivered to the people in Judah in the years before the fall of Jerusalem.

The majority opinion that the divine speech is actual historical speech is not simply due to the dominance of historical interest in biblical studies. The book itself (primarily the prose and the super-scriptions of the poetry) seems to suggest this interpretation. The book is introduced as the "words of Jeremiah . . . to whom the words of Yahweh came." These words are then historically located: between the thirteenth year of Josiah (627 BC) and the end of the captivity of Jerusalem in the eleventh year of Zedekiah (587 BC). Following this introduction, a call account relates how God put his words into the prophet's mouth and commissioned him to go speak to the people.

Immediately after this, the main body of poetry is introduced with this superscription: "The word of Yahweh came to me saying, 'Go proclaim in the hearing of Jerusalem: "Thus says Yahweh . . ."'" (2:1f). Throughout the book are several accounts of Jeremiah publicly delivering divine messages and even an account of how he had them recorded on a scroll (the *Urrolle*). Finally, a sub-scription the end of the book's poetry reads, "Thus far the words of Jeremiah" (51:64)

This evidence for reading the poetry as actual speech may seem overwhelming. However, there are a few mitigating factors. First, in the accounts of Jeremiah's public speeches, the speeches are almost completely rendered in prose. Second, the superscriptions which identify the speeches as God's word through Jeremiah are primarily used to introduce the prose. Of the remainder that introduce poetry, several (including 2:1f) are missing from the Septuagint. This may suggest that they are late editorial designations, and perhaps even that there is an editorial tendency, which predates the present versions, to add superscriptions to provide a historical context (similar to those in the Psalms which couple certain psalms with events in the life of David). Third, although the prose tradition clearly suggests that Jeremiah received oracles from God, proclaimed them, and wrote them down, it is less clear that these should be identified with the poetry of the book. In fact there is a persistent scholarly minority that holds that the prose sermons are the best candidates for the contents of the *Urrolle*.[20] For now, these attempts

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[20] These scholars includes Otto Eisfeldt, Artur Weiser, and John Wolff Miller. Noted in Leo Perdue, "Jeremiah in Modern Research: Approaches and Issues," in *A Prophet to the Nations: Essays in Jeremiah Studies,* 1-32, eds. L.G. Perdue and B.W. Kovacs (Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 1984).

to determine the nature of the passage by extrinsic evidence can be laid aside while the passage itself is considered.

Yahweh's Speech As Dramatic

The first passages of divine speech to be evaluated are six commands:

4:5   Declare in Judah and proclaim in Jerusalem, . . .
4:16 Warn [this nation],[21] announce in Jerusalem, . . .
5:1   Run . . . through the streets of Jerusalem . . . search her
      squares to see if you can find a man . . . who does justice . . .
5:10 Go up through her vine-rows and destroy . . .
5:20 Declare this in the house of Jacob, proclaim it in Judah . . .
6:9   Glean thoroughly as a vine the remnant of Israel . . .[22]

All of these are commonly held to be spoken by God, but there is less agreement on whom God is addressing. Discerning the identity of these addressees may help to decide the question of whether these passages are actual or dramatic speech.

On the basis of the actions commanded, the addressees of the commands may be put into three groups: Messengers, Searchers, and Destroyers. The Messengers are commanded by God to bring a message to the people (twice of impending doom (4:5, 4:16), once of

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[21] Reading לגוי הזה for MT לוימ הנה ("warn the nations: behold"). This emendation was suggested by Freedman and followed by Bright (29) and Thompson (*The Book of Jeremiah,* The New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980),224).

[22] In the MT text, the verb in the first line of this verse is third plural indicative and the verb in the second line is singular imperative. In the LXX both verbs are plural imperatives and "your [m.s.] hand" (ידך) is omitted. In this study will follow the LXX text along with Rashi, Kimchi, Giesebrecht, and Condamin. Rashi and Kimchi's support is mentioned by McKane (144), and Giesebrecht and Condamin's support is mentioned by Holladay (210). Holladay finds this solution "plausible" on the basis of form critical comparison to 5:10, but both Holladay (210) and McKane (143f, 146) favor emending the first verb to singular imperative to fit with the second line in the MT.

indictment (5:20)). The Searchers are to search Jerusalem for any righteous people who might be saved or who might avert the judgment on the city (5:1). The Destroyers are called to come and destroy Jerusalem (5:10, 6:9 both in the metaphorical terms of gleaning a vineyard).

At this point, two possible recipients for these commands can be ruled out. First, all of these commands employ the masculine plural, indicating that more than one person is being addressed. This rules out Jeremiah. Second, the content of the commands limits them to individuals who are either attuned to the coming disaster (Messengers), attuned to God's evaluation of the nation (Searchers), or ready to destroy Jerusalem (Destroyers). This rules out the leaders and people of Jerusalem. If both the prophet and the people are ruled out as the audience, who is left?

There is no general consensus among scholars concerning the identity of the audience. Many are content to identify the Messengers (4:5) or Searchers (5:1)[23] as Jeremiah without dealing with the difficulty of the plural form of the commands. Others identify the Searchers as Jeremiah's audience,[24] overlooking the fact that it is the people themselves who are being examined.[25] The common identification of the Destroyers with historical armies, such as Babylon, is less problematic.

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[23]Hyatt, "The Book of Jeremiah" in *The Interpreters Bible* vol. 5 (New York: Abingdon, 1956), Craigie, McKane, 90.

[24]Thompson, 236.

[25]McKane correctly argues against seeing the people as the searchers: "It would be more natural to suppose that the observers and examiners are from the outside, and that Yahweh's words are spoken because they have been urging him to have mercy on Jerusalem in the manner of Gen. 18:23-28." (*Jeremiah,* 115)

Some, on the basis of the plurals have proposed more drastic interpretations. Duhm, for example, seems to have believed that Jeremiah was the speaker who sent out the Searchers in 5:1.[26] Likewise, Wolff sees Jeremiah sending out the Messengers in 4:5.[27] Neither of these interpretations can stand up to the clear indications in the passages that the speaker is Yahweh, not Jeremiah.[28]

More thoughtful and careful descriptions of the addressee have been given by William Holladay. Holladay describes the audience in 4:4, and 5:20 as "messengers or heralds."[29] He also proposes that the searchers in 5:1 are "witnesses at a cosmic law court,"[30] and significantly he extends this audience to the "destroyers" in 5:10, noting that in light of 5:1 the audience "would appear to be the heavenly court."[31]

What makes this last observation significant, is that it links the audience of one of these commands with audience of another. Holladay is perhaps the first to understand these imperatives as a group. He seems to have come to this understanding in the same way as this study: that is, by recognizing the corresponding positions of the commands in parallel passages and their common introductory function. When these commands are considered as a group a new possibility arises. It can be asked: Is it possible that one audience

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[26]Cited in McKane, 115.

[27]Wolff, *Das Zitat im Prophetenspruch* (Munich: Christian Kaiser, 1937), 191.

[28]". . . I bring evil from the north" rules out Jeremiah as the speaker in 4:5-6. Similarly, ". . . that I may pardon her," rules out Jeremiah in 5:1.

[29]*Jeremiah 1*, 149

[30]Ibid., 175.

[31]Ibid., 184.

could fulfill the roles of Messengers, Searchers, and Destroyers? Although this would be impossible for any earthly group (e.g., the people of Judah or a school of prophets), each of these functions fits well with the group Holladay calls the heavenly court.

The Divine Council. The idea of a heavenly court or divine council is a common one of the Ancient Near East and is seen most clearly in the mythological systems of Israel's Canaanite and Mesopotamian contemporaries.[32] The basic concept is that the pantheon of gods are members of a divine court or legislative assembly presided over by a supreme god. The gods meet together to consider earthly affairs and decide what should be done. The assembly includes messengers, who announce their decisions, as well as the "host of heaven and earth" and the "nations"[33] who carry out their will. These last two groups are natural and political forces apprehended as personal beings.[34]

This way of conceiving of the divine realm provides the context for several passages of the Old Testament. Of course, the concept must be radically modified in order to fit with other elements of Israelite religion: in particular, the absolute supremacy of Yahweh.[35]

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[32]E. Theodore Mullen Jr., *The Assembly of the Gods in Canaanite and Early Hebrew Literature* (Chicago: HSM, 1980). H. Wheeler Robinson, "The Council of Yahweh," *Journal of Theological Studies* 45 (1944): 151-157. G. Ernest Wright, *The Old Testament Against Its Environment* (London: SCM, 1950), 30-41.

[33]G.E. Wright finds this concept of the nations as personal beings incorporated in the Old Testament as the "guardians of the peoples" (Deut 32:8, Ps 82) and the "patron angels of the nations" (Dan 10:20). *OT Against Environment,* 31, 35.

[34]Ibid., 36.

[35]Ibid., 37-40.

Thus in the Old Testament the deity of the other members of the council is radically undercut.[36] Furthermore, they are never given individual identity or even personal names. They remain shadowy background figures which hover between existence and metaphor.

When the concept has been accordingly limited, it has several uses in the Old Testament. First, the council can be used to portray Yahweh's sovereignty. All of the most powerful forces in the universe are subject to Him and worship Him.[37] The idea of Yahweh surrounded by these forces may reflect the ancient practice of a conquering emperor keeping an entourage of conquered kings (as in II Kings 25:28). Second, the council can be viewed as military body with Yahweh as commander. The title "Yahweh of Hosts" (יהוה צבאת) most likely refers to Him in this role.[38] Third, as a legislative assembly, the council can be used to demonstrate the justice of Yahweh's judgments. When the prophets couch their message in the language of a lawsuit (ריב)[39] calling the heavens and earth as witnesses, it is with this function of the divine council in mind. Fourth, the messengers of the council functions both to preserve the transcendence of Yahweh and to portray his communication with men.[40]

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[36]In Psalm 82 their deity is brought into question when Yahweh condemns them to death for failing to promote justice (cf. Isa 24:21). Their status as creature rather than creators is implicit in the fact that in the Old Testament they are never pictured as begotten by God.

[37]E.g., Psalm 29:1-2, 89:5-7.

[38]See for example the use of the term "host" (צבא) in I Kings 22:19, a passage explicitly referring to the divine council. See also B.W. Anderson, "Lord of Hosts," *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible,* III (New York: Abingdon, 1962), 151.

[39]See Isa 1:2-3, Mic 6:1-8, Jer 2:4-13.

[40]E.g., the many references to "angels" (מלאך: messenger).

The Divine Council in Jeremiah 4:5-6:30. Although Jer 4-6, is not usually associated with the divine council, it can now be seen that each of the actions commanded in the introductory commands are functions of the divine council. In searching the city for righteous individuals (5:1), the members of the divine assembly are gathering evidence for a final judgment. In announcing the coming judgment (4:5, 16, 5:20), the messengers of the council are bringing the divine decree to earth. In coming to destroy Jerusalem (5:10, 6:9), the host of Yahweh are carrying out his divine decree.[41] Each of these actions fits well with the conception of the divine council.

Only once in the passage are the members of the council explicitly addressed: In 6:18-19, they are called on to hear Yahweh's sentence on his rebellious people:

> Therefore hear, O nations,
>> and know, O congregation (עדה),[42]
>> what will happen to them.
> Hear, O earth;[43].
>> behold, I am bringing evil on this people
>> the fruit of their devices.

Aside from this one example, the council primarily appears in this passage as the unnamed recipients of commands. Although this

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[41]Cf. Ezk 9.

[42]There is some disagreement on the translation of עדה. Thompson prefers "as a witness" (259). But whether the word is a direct reference to the council or a reference to one of its characteristic functions. See *'edah* in Psalm 82 and parallel with *sodh* in

[43] In similar judicial (ריב) passages witnesses called include the heavens and the earth (Deut 30:19, 32:1, Isa 1:2-3) and the mountains and the hills (Mic. 6:1-2). Commenting on these passages, G. E. Wright says: "Must we not interpret such passages in the light of the Divine Assembly, the members of which constitute the host of heaven and earth?" (*OT Against Environment,* 36).

situation may seem unusual, there are similar passages elsewhere in prophetic literature.[44] For example, many scholars understand the divine council to be the context for Isaiah 40 on the basis of the un-named recipients of commands. Commenting on Isa 40:1, "Comfort (m.pl.), Comfort my people, says your God," James Muilenburg writes, "Already in the opening lines we hear Yahweh addressing the members of his council" [45] If it can be agreed that the divine council is the understood audience of these commands, it should also be admitted that interest taken in them by the text is marginal. The focus is squarely on Yahweh and his will (his coun*sel*, not his coun*cil*).

Reevaluation. Identifying the divine council as the audience of the divine commands raises questions about the common understanding of divine speech as actual speech. First, did these commands ever really pass between Yahweh and the divine council? This becomes more doubtful to the degree that the divine council is considered as

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[44] Many other passages in the prophets featuring imperatives addressed to unnamed m.pl. audiences fit well with the divine council. One might go through the prophets, mark all the imperatives in the masculine plural form, and then evaluate each one asking whether interpreting the addressees as the divine council makes good sense of the in the context. The addressees could be divided up by what they are commanded to do: Destroyers: Isa 13:2, 18:2, Jer 12:9, 48:26, 50:14, 50:26-29, 51:3, 51:11-12, 51:27, Joel 2:1, 3:9, Amos 3:9, 3:13. Helpers (Comforters) Isa 35:3-4, 40:1, 40:3, 48:20aß, 57:14aß, 62:10-11. Messengers: 18:2, 48:20, Jer 46:14, 50:2, Joel 3:9 Praisers: Isa 12:4, Jer 31:7, Lamenters: Isa 13:6, 22:4, Jer 9:10, 9:17, 22:10, Ezk 19:1. Though the members of the divine council may not be the best choice for the addressees of all these commands, they fit well with most of the passages.

[45] "Isaiah: Introduction and Exegesis of Chapters 40-66" in *The Interpreters Bible* 5 (New York: Abingdon, 1956), 422-23. Earlier proponents of this reading of Isaiah 40 are Frank Moore Cross ("The Council of Yahweh in Second Isaiah," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 12 (1953): 274-277") and James Robinson (155).

metaphorical. Just as the cries of Lady Jerusalem could not be actual because of their fictional speaker, these commands could not be actual if they had a fictional audience. Second, even if the divine council is taken as real, are these passages meant to be taken as the record of someone present to hear God's address? Do these passages indicate a reporter in the heavenly court any more than the battle commands indicate a spy in the enemy camps? These questions have not been answered because of the predisposition of scholars to treat divine speech as actual speech has caused them to identify the audiences of the commands as actual audiences (i.e., the people of Judah, the prophet, and the Babylonians) against the evidence that commands are addressed to the divine council.

Whether or not the situation of a passage is fictional is only a superficial distinction between actual and dramatic speech. The real question is the source and intention of the speech. Is it the report of a speech which arose from a historical need or intention? Or is it the creation of an writer portraying a scene? A strong indication that the divine commands are created speech is that they use the techniques of Hebrew poetry. Parallelism is obvious in the commands to the messengers (e.g., "Declare in Judah / And proclaim in Jerusalem"). The commands to destroy are couched in the conventional metaphors of Israel as God's vineyard. The situation implied by the commands to search the city is an allusion to the ancient story of the destruction of Sodom. Taken together, these features suggest that the passages are literary creations, and thus they provide additional evidence that Yahweh's commands are dramatic speeches.

Jeremiah's Speech as Dramatic Speech

The previous section has concluded that a significant portion of the speech of Yahweh in the passage represent dramatic compositions. What about the speech of Jeremiah? Two speeches in which Jeremiah is the first-person speaker can be considered. Both follow divine commands and can be considered responses. In the first speech (5:3-5), Jeremiah responds to God's command to search the city for righteous individuals. Addressing God, he first decries the people's stubborn refusal to repent. Then he reflects that it may only be the poor who have strayed, but on further examination he finds the population is rebellious from top to bottom. In the second speech (6:10-11b), Jeremiah responds to a call to destroy the remnant of Israel. He complains that no one will listen to his warning, and thus he is full of God's wrath.

The fact that Jeremiah responds to the divine commands seems to reopen the question of the nature of the commands. First, if the divine council is really being addressed, why does Jeremiah answer? Second, if Jeremiah responds, does it not imply that he was there and thus could have heard and recorded the actual speech?

In answer to the first question, it should first be kept in mind the commands cannot possibly be addressed to Jeremiah because they are in plural form. However, the situation of a prophet responding to God's address to the council is not unprecedented. Isaiah 6:8 presents the prophet listening in on the council. When God puts a question to the council, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?", Isaiah answers, "I'm here! (הנני) send me!" Another story

in Kings 22, presents the prophet Micaiah listening in on God's interaction with his council.

This answer to the first question makes the second question more pointed. It seems that the text really intends to show Jeremiah was present in the divine council. This interpretation is given extra support by the statement later in the book that a true prophet is one who has "stood in the council of Yahweh to perceive and to hear his word" (23:18, 22). However, the question is not whether there is a council, or in what sense the prophet may be said to have stood in the council; rather the question is whether these words are a report of actual words spoken in the council.

Once again it will be asserted that the speech is dramatic, but this time without the aid of a fictional speaker, or audience. It should be noted first that with the introduction of responses, the passages are not merely individual speeches (i.e., monologues), they are elements of conversations. These conversations are either entirely actual or entirely dramatic. So one argument that the prophet's speech is dramatic is that is responds to a divine speech that is dramatic. Of course, if the reader is not convinced that the divine speech is dramatic this will be an unconvincing circular argument.

For the unconvinced, it can be shown that the speech of Jeremiah also has marks of being literary speech. One important mark is that both speeches present temporal sequences that would take much longer to happen than for the prophet to speak them. The response in 6:10-11a presents the following sequence: 1) the prophet seeks to find receptive people to warn: "To whom shall I

speak and give warning?"; 2) no one is found: "Behold, their ears are closed"; 3) he becomes angry: "I am full of the wrath of Yahweh." A similar sequence is presented in 5:3-5: 1) the prophet condemns the people: "they have refused to repent"; 2) he believes he may have misjudged the great: "I will go to the great and speak to them"; 3) he finds that they too are guilty: "But all alike had broken the yoke." Both of these processes would take a considerable amount of time-- in particular, time to search out receptive or righteous people. However both of these processes are dramatically portrayed as a single speech. This way of portraying a temporal process with dramatic speech has already been seen in the example of the battle commands (6:4-5). There the process took a day's time: 1) Battle plans are made: "let us attack at noon"; 2) The first opportunity is missed: "Too bad, for the day declines"; 3) New plans are made: "let us attack by night." It seems improbable that any of these passages consist of reports of three actual speeches which have been stitched together. Instead each of them were composed as a unit to dramatically represent a narrative sequence

If this is not enough evidence that these speeches are dramatic compositions, readers can consider the literary qualities of the speeches. They are composed in poetic style with parallel lines. They use conventional metaphors such as "uncircumcised ears" (6:10), and "broken the yoke . . . burst the bonds" (5:4, cf. 2:20). Finally, 5:1-5 is written in conformity to the story of the destruction of Sodom. Altogether there seems to be ample reason to take these passages of Jeremiah's speech as dramatic speech.

Division Of Speakers

Some of the past interpreters of Jeremiah, have claimed that the voices of Yahweh and Jeremiah are indistinguishable. As Rudolph depicts the situation, the "I" of the prophet and the "I" of God run together like paints in a watercolor.[46] However, the analysis above has distinguished between passages that are spoken solely by Yahweh or solely by Jeremiah, and it will be demonstrated below that there are sufficient criteria for distinguishing the two dramatic speakers in the rest of Jer 4-6. The discussion will begin with passages where the speaker is somewhat obvious. It will then examine these passages for distinctions between the speakers that will provide guidelines for distinguishing the less obvious passages.

Self-evident Speech Of Yahweh

The self-evident speech of Yahweh is the speech which reveals a speaker who can only be Yahweh. For example, if it is accepted that commands discussed are addressed to the divine council,[47] this makes it highly likely that the speaker is Yahweh. Who else has the divine council at his command? In these divine council passages the speaker must be inferred from the commands, but in most other passages a first person pronoun represents the speaker. In many passages in Jer 4-6, the speaker can only be Yahweh. An obvious example is: "I placed the sand as a bound for the sea" (5:22). The "I" is clearly Yahweh, the Creator. A slightly less obvious example is 6:27: "I have made you an assayer and tester of my people." Most

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[46] Quoted by Holladay, 137.

[47] 4:5-6, 16; 5:1, 10, 20-21, 6:6, 9, 18-19.

readers will perceive that this is Yahweh speaking to the prophet he has commissioned. These two roles of Yahweh (creator and commissioner) are unique in the passage. Almost all of the other first-person speeches of Yahweh portray him either as the aggrieved party with respect to the people's sin or as their judge and punisher.

In several passages Yahweh relates how his people have rejected him (notice the first person pronoun in each case):

4:(16-)17	She has rebelled against me.
4:22	My people are foolish, they know me not.
5:7(-8)	Your children have forsaken me
5:(10-)11	Israel and Judah have been utterly faithless to me.
5:19	You have forsaken me and served foreign gods.
6:(18-)19	They have not given heed to my words; And as for my law they have rejected it.

(Yahweh's "words" and "laws" in 6:18-19 refer to the speeches in 6:16-17; thus those speeches are also spoken by Yahweh.) Also in this role of the aggrieved party, Yahweh indicates the response he wants from the people ("Do you not fear me?" 5:22) and the response that will not help ("Your sacrifices [are not] pleasing to me," 6:20). Another passage that could fit this role is 6:7: "sickness and wounds are ever before me." It is not totally clear that the "me" in this verse is Yahweh: it could possibly be Jeremiah. However, the important point is that Jeremiah could not possibly be the speaker of the other eight verses.

The greatest number of self-evident Yahweh speeches can be identified because the speaker is the punisher of the people. These passages include:

4:(5-) 6	I bring evil from the north and great destruction.
4:28	I have not relented [i.e., from my plan to punish them]
5:9, 29	Shall I not punish them for these things?

> 5:14 I am making my words . . . fire . . . and this people wood.
> 5:15 (-17) I am bringing upon you a nation from afar.
> 6:8 Be warned . . . lest I make you a desolation.
> 6:(11b-)12 I will stretch out my hand against . . . the land.
> 6:15 At the time I punish them, they shall be overthrown.
> 6:(18-) 19 I am bringing evil upon this people.
> 6:21 I will lay before this people stumbling blocks.

A few other passages can be identified as Yahweh's speech because they imply punishment. The rhetorical question "How can I pardon them for these things?" (5:7), has the same intent as "Shall I not *punish* them for these things? (5:9). Similarly, the reason given for the search for a righteous man is "that I may pardon her" (5:1); this implies the alternative of punishment. Another two passages which promise "I will not a make a full end" (4:27, 5:18) must be understood as qualifications of the certainty of punishment (i.e., Yahweh will at least make a partial end). Finally, the command for Jeremiah to pour out wrath on the entire population (6:11b) should be understood as Yahweh's punishment. All seventeen of these passages in which the first person speaker is the punisher of the nation can only be spoken by Yahweh.

Of these passages, in which Yahweh announces punishment, four are preceded by a resultative "therefore" (לכן: 5:14; 6:15, 18f., 21) and four by a causal "for" (כי: 4:6, 27; 6:6, 12). Of these eight passages, five are also preceded by some form of "thus says Yahweh" (כה אמר יהוה: 4:27; 5:14; 6: 6, 15, 21). These features suggests that the passages may function as the "Announcement of Judgment" section of Westermann's "Judgment Speech." If this is true it raises the question of whether they present the dramatic speech of Yahweh, or

only a quotation of his speech. The non-dramatic nature of the "Announcement of Judgment" can be seen in the prophetic narratives where the clearest examples of the judgment form occur. In these narratives, the prophet who addresses the king or people is clearly the speaker, and Yahweh does not appear as a character, but only as the source of a message or quotation.

For most of these passages, a good case can be made that they are dramatic speech and not quotation. First, the situation of the prophet as a messenger is not mentioned.[48] Second, five of these passages (4:6; 6:12, 15, 18f., 21) follow other passages where Yahweh is the speaker: it is unlikely that he quotes himself. Third, of the four that remain, two of the passages (5:14, 6:6) are not so much announcements of judgment as they are dramatic initiations of judgment (e.g., "Hew (m. pl.) down her trees, cast up a siege mound": 6:6). This leaves only 4:27 as a possible instances of Jeremiah quoting Yahweh; the others are best taken as the dramatic speech of Yahweh.

Still the phrase "thus says Yahweh" (כה אמר יהוה) and the related phrase "utterance of Yahweh" (נאם־יהוה) pose a problem to the dramatic understanding of Yahweh's speech. If they stand out-side Yahweh's speech and are spoken by another speaker, then Yahweh's speech is subordinated to them. In other words, Yahweh's speeches are quotations which are merely components of another speakers speech. This is why quotations like the "citations of the sinful people" are judged to be not properly dramatic.

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[48] Unless it is assumed that the MT's superscription in 2:1 extends over to chs. 4-6.

The challenge these phrases present to the dramatic reading can be overcome. First, it can be observed that the designation of these phrases as "messenger formulas" has lost ground since Westermann proposed it.[49] Second, even if these phrases introduce messages in other prophetic literature, they do not seem to function that way in Jer 4-6. It has been demonstrated above that Yahweh's speeches in the passage are not presented as messages to be conveyed to the people but rather as direct speeches to the divine council, to Lady Jerusalem, and to the prophet - thus no messenger is needed. Furthermore, it was shown that it is unlikely that these are reports of actual direct speech, but rather they are literary portrayals of direct speech - thus no reporter is need. Finally, the reason that messengers and reporters use quotation formulas is to distinguish the quoted speech from their own. But in Jer 4-6, of the seventeen passages where one of these phrases is used, fifteen have been identified above as self-evident Yahweh speech without relying on the phrases - thus no quotation formulas are needed.

If these phrases are not to be understood as messenger formulas or quotation formulas, their presence in the passage demands a new explanation in terms of function and source. Their function is not to identify the speaker but to emphasize the authority as divine speech. Two possible sources fit with this interpretation. First, the phrases may be read as part of the dramatic speech of Yahweh himself. He may be portrayed as asserting his authority. Second, they may be read as reminders to the readers from the authors or editors

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[49] See for instance the discussion of Samuel Meier: *Speaking of Speaking: Marking Direct Discourse in the Hebrew Bible,* (New York: E J Brill, 1992), 273-298.

concerning the authority of the speech. (n.b., the author is not "Jeremiah," the other dramatic speaker; neither are the readers "the men of Judah and Jerusalem" the dramatic audience.) The fact that there are around twenty-five occurrences of these phrases in the Masoretic text of Jeremiah which are not represented in the Septuagint is probably evidence of a growing awareness of the authority of the speech and an effort to preserve that awareness in the text.[50]

Two final self-evident speeches of Yahweh are marked by these "divine authority" phrases. The first is rather straightforward: "In that day [--utterance of Yahweh--] courage shall fail both king and princes" (4:9). The second is more problematic because without the phrase it would probably be read as the speech of Jeremiah. The passage begins: "Thus says Yahweh, Behold a people is coming from the north country" (6:22-23). It proceeds as a poetic description of invasion common in Jeremiah speech. It also addresses Jerusalem as Lady Zion, a term more common to Jeremiah. Finally, it has a virtual doublet in 50:41-42 where Yahweh does not seem to be the speaker. Sensing these difficulties, one interpreter suggested deleting the phrase and reading it as the speech of Jeremiah.[51] However, if the author took what was originally a mere description of invasion and transformed it into a warning spoken by Yahweh, then why should the author's creation be undone? It is best read as a speech of Yahweh.

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[50] The phrase נאם יהוה occurs about 20 more times in MT, and יהוה כה אמר occurs about 5 more times. It is interesting to note that over half of the occurrences of these two phrases in the whole Old Testament are found in Jeremiah: כה אמר יהוה: 151 out of 291; נאם יהוה: 162 out of 253.

[51] McKane, 151-2.

Self-evident Speeches Of Jeremiah

Forty of the eighty-eight verse in Jer 4:5-6:30 have now been identified as the speech of Yahweh. There are fewer passages which are self-evidently spoken by Jeremiah. This is partly because there are fewer attributes unique to the role a prophet than there are attributes unique to God. The two passages assigned to Jeremiah in the previous discussion of dramatic speech portray him searching for righteous individuals (5:3-5) and attempting to warn the nation (6:10-11b). There are only two other passages assigned to Jeremiah by most interpreters. The first (4:10) is Jeremiah's contention that Yahweh has deceived the people by saying there would be peace (presumably through false prophets). This speech is easy to identify as Jeremiah's speech because it is introduced by "Then I said" (ואמר) followed by a direct address to Yahweh (אהה אדני יהוה). The second (4:23-26) is interpreted as an apocalyptic vision. It begins, "I looked on the earth, and lo it was waste and void." The passage goes on to describe the destruction of the whole cosmos "before Yahweh, and his fierce anger." The association of prophets with visions and the third person reference to Yahweh make the connection with Jeremiah clear.

References to Yahweh in the third person help to mark two other passages as the speech of Jeremiah. In the first, Jeremiah reports, "They have spoken falsely of Yahweh" (5:12-13). In the second Jeremiah concludes a report on the refining of the people: "Refuse silver they are called because Yahweh has rejected them" (6:30) It is unclear where this passage begins, but it seems best to

take all of 6:28-30 as Jeremiah's report on his job as "an assayer and tester" (6:27).[52]

Another group of passage that appear to be spoken by Jeremiah are the laments. Not every one agrees on the identity of the lamenters, but it is clearly not Yahweh. Two important ones read as follows:

> 4: 8 For this reason (עַל־זֹאת) gird you with sackcloth and wail
> [that כִּי] the fierce anger of Yahweh
> has not turned back from us (1 c.pl.).

> 6:26 O [my darling] people,[53]] gird on sackcloth, and roll in ashes
> make mourning as for an only son,
> most bitter lamentation;
> for (כִּי) suddenly the destroyer will come upon us (1 c.pl.).

In both of these verses the speaker first speaks to the people calling them to mourn and then identifies with the speaker as one who will experience the destruction. This fits with dual role of Jeremiah as both a prophet to the people and a sufferer with the people. Thus it seems best to assign both passages to him.

Holladay and Biddle disagree with this interpretation. They both assign the first part of the each of these verses (the call to lament) to Yahweh and the second part (the lament) to the people. Their interpretations are dependent on translating *kiy* (כִּי) as a recitative (i.e., as the introduction of a direct quote).[54] Biddle's

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[52] Bright comments, "The assayer now gives his verdict [verses] 28-30." (50).

[53] This translation of בַּת־עַמִּי is suggested by William Stinespring ("No Daughter of Zion" 136f.) and will be defended below.

[54] Holladay, *Jeremiah* 1, 150.

translations reads as follows (notice the use of semicolons and quo-
tation marks to translate כי):

> 4:8   Because of this don sackcloth, lament, and wail:
>   "The burning wrath of YHWH has not turned from us."

> 6:26 . . . Mourn as for an only child, / bitter lamentation:
>   "Suddenly comes/ the destroyer upon us."[55]

The problem with these translations is that syntactical studies have
thoroughly discredited the recitative use of *kiy*.[56] Their interpreta-
tion falls with their translation; if both part of the speech have the
same speaker, then the only likely candidate is Jeremiah.

Two other laments need to be considered. The first is quite
similar to 4:8, and 6:26:

> Behold, he comes up like the clouds,
>   his chariots like the whirlwind;
> his horses are swifter than eagles -
>   woe to us (1 c.pl.), for we are ruined!   (4:13)

Like the other two lament verses, 4:13 combines words that would
not be spoken by the people (the warning) with words in the first
common plural that could be spoken be spoken by them (the
lament). In this case the connection between the two parts is not as
strong making it possible that the people speak the last line.
However, by analogy with the first two verses it still seems best to
assign the passage to Jeremiah.

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[55] *Polyphony and Symphony in Prophetic Literature: Rereading
Jeremiah 7-20* (Macon: Mercer University, 1996), 19, 23.

[56] Samuel A. Meier cites four studies that discredit this interpretation of
כי Zorrell (1933), Esh (1957), Schoors (1981), and Banstra (1982). (*Speaking of
Speaking,* 20.)
    A. Schoors writes, "The *ki recitativum* as a specific syntactic category
should be deleted from grammars and dictionaries" ("The Particle כי,"
Oudtestamentische Studiën 21 (1981), 258-259.).

The speaker of the final lament (6:24) is even less certain. The lament is a response to a warning about the foe from the north addressed to Lady Zion (בת־ציון):

> We have heard the report of it,
>> and our hands fall helpless;
> anguish has taken hold of us,
>> pain as of a woman in travail.

Does Lady Zion speak? If so why is her pain only like ("as of:" כ־) a woman in travail? Or does Jeremiah speak as a representative of the Zion community? It is difficult to say, but on the basis of the other passages the speech can tentatively be assigned to Jeremiah. One interesting note about this passage is that a doublet of both the warning and the lament occurs in 50:41-43 - only the warning is addressed to Lady Babylon instead of Lady Zion and for the unnamed speaker of the lament, 50:43 has the King of Babylon. This suggests that the purpose of the lament is nor so much to portray the character of the lamenter (his prophetic ecstasy or emotional sensitivity) as to portray the seriousness of the news. In fact, the lament as a response to bad news (often including weak hands and "birth pangs") was a convention of the Ancient Near East.[57] Although identifying Jeremiah as the lamenter does not reveal his psychological character, it can still be said to portray his position as one who shares the fate of the people of Jerusalem.

Although the identity of these last two lamenters is not totally clear, a careful reader of the passage (even the English translation)

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[57] Delbert R. Hillers, "Convention in Hebrew Literature: the Reaction to Bad News," *Zeitschrift für die Alttestamantliche Wissenschaft* 22, no. 1 (1965): 86-89.

would probably be able to identify the other eight passages as spoken by Jeremiah.

Distinguishing Less Obvious Speakers

Almost three-fourths of the passage (63/88 verses) has been assigned to speakers for the most part on fairly obvious grounds. It now becomes necessary to rely on more subtle clues. Some of these can found by considering the characterizations of Jeremiah and Yahweh that arise from the passages obviously spoken by them. Yahweh in his fierce anger is bent on punishing his rebellious people. A striking example of his total lack of sympathy is his response to the cry of Lady Jerusalem. Her desperate cry of agony, "I writhe in pain; Oh, the walls of my heart" (4:19-21) is met with a slap in the face: "[Surely כי] my people are foolish . . . they are stupid" (4:22). Jeremiah on the other hand is more sympathetic. He laments for the people (4:8, 6:26: though this may have more to do with his identity as one of the people than his deep compassion), he argues in defense of the people (4:10), and he is only willing to concur with Yahweh's harsh assessment after he has searched high and low for an alternative (5:3-5; 6:10-11a).

This distinction between the sympathetic prophet and the unsympathetic God may help to distinguish the speakers in passages like the following:

> And you, O desolate one,
> what do you mean that you dress in scarlet,
>> that you dress yourself in ornaments of gold,
>> that you enlarge your enlarge your eyes with paint?

In vain you beautify yourself.
Your lovers despise you; they seek your life. (4:30)

[Yes, it is][58] a cry as of a woman in travail,
anguish as one bringing forth her first child,
the cry of [Lady] Zion gasping for breath,
stretching out her hands,
"Woe is me! I am fainting before murderers! (4:31)

The first portrayal (4:30) of Lady Jerusalem as a harlot foolishly trying to seduce her murderers seems consistent with Yahweh's bitter judgment and could be assigned to him. The second portrayal of Lady Jerusalem as a young mother in childbirth and as the victim of murderers (who actually are sent by Yahweh!) is more consistent with Jeremiah's more sympathetic view and could be assigned to him.

Dividing passages on the basis of the characterizations of the speakers may seem subjective, but it can be given a more objective grounding by noticing the terminology used by the two characters. To refer to the people of Judah and Jerusalem, Yahweh regularly uses the term "my people" (עמי). In two of the passages identified above as self-evident speeches of Yahweh (4:22, 6:27), he uses the term, and in twenty-three other passages elsewhere in the book the term is almost exclusively used by Yahweh.[59] Jeremiah on the other hand refers to the people as *bat-'ami* (בת־עמי). This term, which many translators woodenly translate as "daughter of my people," is better translated as a familiar term that connotes affection or even tender

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[58] The RSV interprets כי קול as "For I heard a cry."

[59] 2:11, 13, 31, 32, 7:12, 8:7, 9:1, 12:14, 16, 15:7, 18:15, 23:2, 13, 22, 27, 32, 29:32, 30:3, 31:14, 33:24, 50:6 could all be spoken by Yahweh. 51:45 is questionable.

pity. William Stinespring suggests "my poor people" or "my darling people."[60] The term occurs in one of the speeches already identified as a self-evident speech of Jeremiah (6:26), and although there is not agreement on its six occurrences elsewhere in the book, none of them are necessarily spoken by Yahweh[61] and all of them indicate a sympathetic speaker. The six occurrences outside the book (five in Lamentations) are also all spoken by speakers who pity Jerusalem, and none of them seem to be spoken by Yahweh.[62]

The contrast between these two terms is most clearly seen in 9:1-2 (Heb. 8:23-9:1), where they occur in adjacent verses:

O that my head were waters,
        and my eyes a fountain of tears,
that I might weep day and night
        for the slain of [my darling] people (בת-עמי)!

O that I had in the desert
        a wayfarers' lodging place,
that I might leave my people (עמי)
        and go away from them!
For they are all adulterers,
        a company of treacherous men.

The first speaker weeps because of the punishment of his darling people. The second speaker retorts that he only wants to get away from his people's sinful behavior. Surely, based on the characteriza-

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[60] "No Daughter of Zion" 136f.

[61] 8:11, 8:19, 21, 22, 9:1 (Heb. 8:23),14:17. The occurrence of בת-עמי in the MT 9:6 (which is clearly spoken by Yahweh) is probably textual corruption. Many critics suggest emendations. Rudolph emends it to read רעתם ("their evil") which is suggested by the LXX and Targum. Most scholars recognize that the introduction to 14:17, "You shall say to them this word:" (which suggests Yahweh's speech follows) does not fit well with the verse. Some suggest that it refers to the preceding verses.

[62] Isa 22:4, Lam 2:11, 3:48, 4:3, 6, 10.

tions of the speakers given above, the first is best identified as Jeremiah, and the second as Yahweh. Yahweh's angry comeback to a sympathetic description of the people is a common feature in the book.[63]

When these two terms are recognized as distinguishing between Jeremiah and Yahweh, several more passages can be assigned speakers. Yahweh can be assigned 5:26-28, "Surely wicked men are found among my people (עמי)" as well as 5:30-31, "My people (עמי) love to have it so, but what will you do when the end comes?" Jeremiah can be assigned 6:13-14: "They [the priests and prophets] have healed the wound of [my darling] people (בת־עמי) lightly, saying 'Peace, peace' when there is no peace." This passage of Jeremiah's speech when seen together with 4:10 shows his consistent complaint that the priests and especially the prophets have deceived the people into thinking they would not be punished.

A final passage whose speaker can be determined on the basis of this criterion is 4:11-12.

> At that time it will be said to this people and Jerusalem, "A hot wind from the bare heights in the desert toward [my darling people (בת־עמי)], not to winnow or to cleanse, a wind to full for this comes for me.["] Now [I too (גם־אני)] speak judgment on them.

Although this passage is usually considered to be spoken by Yahweh, John Berridge convincingly argues that it is spoken by Jeremiah

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[63] 2:23, 25-26, 29, 35, 3:4-5, 4:22, 8:8, 16-17, 10:21, 14:10, 15:1, 6. Yahweh's angry responses to the cries of the people are related to the prohibition of Jeremiah's prayers for the people.

(partly on the basis of the occurrence of בת־עמי).[64] This reading

makes good sense of the wind coming "for me" (לי). Those who read

the passage as spoken by Yahweh are forced to the improbable

reading "at my behest." As Jeremiah's words, they fit with the pic-

ture, seen above in the laments, of Jeremiah sharing in the fate of his

people.

Identifying this speech as the speech of Jeremiah proves to be

the key to understanding 4:9-12. The unit begins with a judgment

speech of Yahweh (v. 9). Jeremiah responds: "Then I said, 'Ah, Lord

Yahweh, surely thou hast utterly deceived this people and Jerusalem

. . .'" (v. 10) This is followed by the speech now identified as

Jeremiah's (11-12). What is curious is that the introduction of the

speech *intentionally* leaves the speaker ambiguous: "At that time it

will be said to this people and Jerusalem."[65] The reader wonders

who is speaking this judgment speech. The sympathetic term "my

darling people" gives the first clue, then the wind coming "for me"

gives another clue. The reader wonders, could the speaker be the

sympathetic Jeremiah who just complained to God on the people's

behalf? In the last line the speaker is dramatically revealed when

Jeremiah plainly states, "Now I too speak judgment upon them."[66]

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[64] *Prophet, People, and the Word of Yahweh* (Zürich: EVZ-Verlag, 1970), 111-3.

[65] That this is an intentional ambiguity is supported by the following observation. Throughout the book, there are 25 other instances in which a temporal phrase ("in those days"; "at that time"; "in that day"; or "the days are coming") introduces a short prose prediction. In all 25 of these other cases, the speech is clearly indicated as Yahweh's speech with the formula "Yahweh's word" (נאמ יהוה).

[66] The occurrence of "Then I said" and "Now it is I who speak" presents a problem to the dramatic understanding of the passage. In dramatic speech the speakers are not subordinated to the voice of a reporter (expository

What is remarkable about this passage is that it shows the narrator as very conscious of how the speeches reveal their speakers. The narrator's control of the identity of the speakers goes beyond simply making the identities clear; here, he uses clarity and obscurity for dramatic effect. If this reading is correct, it indicates that the reader's desire to discover the various speakers is not simply a modern extra-biblical concern (like concerns with dating, authorship, and composition); on the contrary, the original author expected it of his readers.

Conclusion

This chapter has argued that Jer 4-6 consists primarily of dramatic speeches. First the dramatic speeches of Lady Jerusalem and the enemy generals were identified. Then it was asked whether the speeches of Jeremiah and Yahweh could also be understood as dramatic. This understanding would be a direct challenge to the traditional understanding that the speeches are records of Jeremiah's prophetic oracles. In its place, the dramatic understanding suggests a new relationship between the speeches and the historical prophet: that they are a portrayal rather than a product.

It may be that the strongest evidence for this new understanding is not the way in which they relate to their speakers, but the way they relate to their audience. In the traditional under-

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speech) or narrator (narrative speech). In this passage Jeremiah seems to be the first person narrator, and thus the passage, 4:9-12, is more like narrative than drama. It is important to notice that this situation is unusual in the passage. The only other passage like it is 5:18-19 in which Yahweh is the narrator. In distinction from the rest of Jer 4-6, these two passages are in prose.

standing, it was assumed that Jeremiah's prophetic speeches were addressed to the people of Judah and Jerusalem. However, assuming that they are the actual audience, it is surprising how seldom they are directly addressed. The named addressees are the fictional Lady Jerusalem (4:14, 30, 5:7, 6:24), the defunct House of Israel (5:14), and the people of Benjamin (6:1). None of these quite fit the people (they are not "Jerusalem," they are her children, 10:20). Several of the other passages which apparently address the people are actually part of addresses to the messengers of the divine council (4:5-6, 17, 5:21). Others which appear to address the people in the second-person (6:16-17), are followed with "But they said (ויאמרו) . . ." where the people are clearly referred to the third-person, as dramatic characters not as the actual audience. This leaves only 4:8, 5:30, and 6:21 as possible direct addresses to the people. This is a significant problem for the old interpretation.

In the old interpretation, it was not thought to be important to distinguish between the speakers. The distinctions between them were blurred by saying that Jeremiah identified so strongly with Yahweh or so strongly with the people that it is often impossible to say who is speaking. The new interpretation offered here demands that the speakers be clearly identified. Up to this point in the study, the speakers of 75 of the 88 verses in Jer 4:5-6:30 have been identified. The following chart presents the results. The speakers listed in parentheses have not been identified yet; they will be identified in the following chapters.

Chart 1: Dramatic Speakers

4:5-6	Yahweh	5:1	Yahweh	6:1	(Jeremiah)
4:7	(Yahweh)	5:2	(Yahweh)	6:2-3	(Jeremiah)
4:8	Jeremiah	5:3	Jeremiah	6:4-5	Enemy generals
4:9	Yahweh	5:4-5	Jeremiah	6:6-8	Yahweh
4:10	Jeremiah	5:6	Yahweh	6:9	Yahweh
4:11-12	Jeremiah	5:7-9	Yahweh	6:10-11a	Jeremiah
4:13	Jeremiah	5:10-11	Yahweh	6:11b-12	Yahweh
4:14	(Yahweh)	5:12-13	Jeremiah	6:13-14	Jeremiah
4:15	(Jeremiah)	5:14	Yahweh	6:15	Yahweh
4:16-17	Yahweh	5:15-17	Yahweh	6:16-19	Yahweh
4:18	(Yahweh)	5:18-19	Yahweh	6:20-21	Yahweh
4:19-21	Lady Jerusalem	5:20-22	Yahweh	6:22-23	Yahweh
4:22	Yahweh	5:23-24	(Yahweh)	6:24	Jeremiah
4:23-26	Jeremiah	5:25	(Yahweh)	6:25	(Yahweh)
4:27	Yahweh	5:26-29	Yahweh	6:26	Jeremiah
4:28	Yahweh	5:30-31a	Jeremiah	6:27	Yahweh
4:29	(Jeremiah)	5:31b	Yahweh	6:28-30	Jeremiah
4:30	Yahweh				
4:31	Jeremiah				

The identification of speakers in this chapter was primarily achieved by observing the character of each speech's first person speaker. (The passages whose speakers have not been identified all lack a first-person reference.) The success of this identification process not only shows the viability of the dramatic interpretation, it also demonstrates its interpretive utility. Identifying the speakers clarified the meaning of several individual speeches and also threw light the characterizations of the speakers. In the next chapter the utility of the dramatic reading for analyzing structure will be considered.

CHAPTER 4

RHETORICAL ANALYSIS

Three Approaches To Unit Division

The preceding chapter argued that Jer 4-6 is primarily com-
posed of dramatic speeches. This evaluation of the passage provides
a new basis for understanding its structure. To build an analysis of
structure on dramatic speeches demands greater precision in deter-
mining and describing the extent of the speeches. How can their
boundaries be recognized? How does the reader know when one
speech comes to and end and another one begins?

One way of determining boundaries is to observe shifts in con-
tent. The shifts may occur in subject matter, point of view, tone,
terminology, or style. Thus there are unit boundaries at the begin-
ning and end of the prose in 4:9-12 and 5:18-19, and at the begin-
ning and end of the anaphora in 4:23-26. These shifts have been
readily observed in the past, but fewer interpreters have noticed the
shifts in speaking voices. For example, there are shifts in the person
and voice of the pronouns used for the speaker, audience, or subject.
These shifts were the primary means of identifying speakers in the
previous chapter.

A second way of determining boundaries is to look for pivots or
joints: that is passages which respond to other passages. A common
example is the logical pivot provided by the word "therefore" (לכן).

A speech example would be an answer following a question. For the most part, this type of pivot will be considered a relation between sub-units and will not be considered separately here.

A third way, which will be pursued here, is to look for the edges of units. This is possible in speech units because, the beginnings and endings of speeches call for special techniques because they must perform special linguistic functions. Because these functions are common to most speeches, the introductory and conclusive techniques used to accomplish them are common as well. Observing the location of these techniques in a passage often proves an effective means for locating the boundaries of speech units.

Before discussing specific techniques and their occurrence in Jer 4-6, it will be helpful to clarify their nature in terms of what kind of speeches they introduce and conclude.

Rhetorical Techniques
for Introduction and Conclusion

Introduction of Rhetorical Techniques:
Universal, Functional Nature

The introductory and conclusive techniques being discussed here are *speech* techniques, and *speech* is a apt description because it suggests both everyday conversation and formal oratory. In everyday speech, speakers unconsciously use conventional speech techniques to accomplish their speech purposes. For example, a person who says, "Hey, wait a minute. Why don't we take my car?" unconsciously does much more than convey the information that her car is available. The exclamation "hey" and the idiomatic imperative

"wait a minute" function to catch the attention of her listeners. Putting the suggestion about her car in the form of a question subtly engages her listeners by using a syntactic form that invites a response. The way these techniques like these are used in everyday speech is studied by modern linguistic sciences such as discourse analysis.

In formal oratory, a speech is prepared with the speech purposes in mind; and the speaker is more likely to consciously employ the speech techniques to involve, persuade or move his audience. The study of these techniques falls under the title "rhetoric," and from the time of Aristotle, rhetoricians have given special attention to techniques for introduction and conclusion. For this reason, these techniques may reasonably be called rhetorical techniques. However, throughout rhetoric's long history, the boundaries of its domain have been neither fixed nor uncontested. Its extension into biblical studies under the flag of "rhetorical criticism" has only complicated matters. Thus the rhetorical nature of these techniques must be carefully defined.

What makes these techniques rhetorical is their function of engaging the audience of a speech. This function distinguishes them from the stylistic and structural elements that are the main concerns of the "rhetorical criticism" of James Muilenburg and his followers. (These stylistic and structural elements might be better described as literary features because they are products of an artist who is trying to craft a literary work rather than a speaker trying to engage and persuade an audience.) Another distinctive of these techniques is that they are universal. Everywhere that speakers attempt to

engage their listeners these techniques will be used. The technique of using a vocative to catch attention could be found in ancient Egypt or modern Mongolia. This universality distinguishes the techniques from techniques that are limited to a certain culture or time period. No special theory is needed to explain why speeches in Jeremiah begin with questions, but to explain the presence of chiasm or link-words, interpreters like Lundbom must hypothesize "canons of Hebrew rhetoric"[1] - canons which were only used by "Deuteronomistic scribes" and could only be understood by "a congregation accustomed to temple rhetoric."[2]

The following sections will show how these universal speech techniques function rhetorically to introduce and conclude units in Jer 4-6.

Introductory Rhetorical Techniques

In his introduction to Isaiah 40-63, James Muilenburg provides a helpful list of devices used to introduce stanzas and strophes of prophetic poetry. He lists:

1) Oracular formulae ("Thus says Yahweh")
2) General invocations or appeals to hear
3) Exclamations like "Behold"
4) Interrogatives like "who"
5) Vivid pictures or scenes
6) Imperatives exclusive of invocations

[1]Lundbom, *Jeremiah: A Study in Ancient Hebrew Rhetoric*, SBL Dissertation Series, no. 18. (Missoula, Montana: Scholars Press, 1975), 113.

[2]Ibid., 119. It seems the only other people who are able to perceive these techniques are a few modern "rhetorical analysts."

7) Cohortatives
8) Addresses[3]

All of these fit the description of universal rhetorical techniques except for the first one. The "oracular formula," is clearly in a different class from the others: it is a specific verbal formation characteristic only of a certain class of ancient speech (i.e., Israelite prophecy).[4] The others are common speech techniques used for emphasis. At the beginning of speeches or parts of speeches units they perform the rhetorical function of catching the attention of an audience. They can be streamlined as four common syntactic features: commands, questions, exclamations, and vocatives.

These four rhetorical techniques introduce almost all the speeches in Jer 4-6. Consider the obvious dramatic speeches. Lady Jerusalem's laments begin with exclamations:

4:19   My anguish, My anguish!   I writhe in pain!
4:31   Woe is me.   I am fainting before murderers.

The speeches of the enemy generals begin with commands and an exclamation:

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[3] Muilenburg, "Isaiah: Introduction and Exegesis of Chapters 40-66" in *The Interpreters Bible* 5 (New York: Abingdon, 1956), 392.

[4] For certain of Yahweh's speeches, the use of an attention-catching device is not enough to indicate that Yahweh has begun speaking; for this purpose, the phrase "Thus says Yahweh" is employed. Observe how it is indispensable in the following passage:

6:5   [Enemy:]   Up and let us attack by night and destroy her palaces!

6:6   For thus says Yahweh of hosts:

   Hew down her trees, cast up a siege mound against Jerusalem.

Without out "thus says Yahweh," the reader would probably take the commands in 6:6 as a continuation of the general's speech in 6:5. Three other speeches of Yahweh must be introduced with "Thus says Yahweh" to prevent readers from interpreting them as Jeremiah's speech (6:9, 16, 22).

> 6:4   Prepare war against her.   Up, let us attack at noon!
> 6:5   Alas for the day declines, the shadows lengthen.
> 6:5   Up, then and let us attack by night.

The speeches of Jeremiah begin with vocatives, questions, and an exclamation:

> 4:10   Ah Lord Yahweh, surely you have deceived this people.
> 5:3   O Yahweh, do not your eyes look for truth?
> 6:10   To whom shall I speak and give warning?

In the introductions of all these speeches, the rhetorical techniques function to catch attention.

The most common introductory technique in Jer 4-6 is the use of multiple commands.   As can be seen in the speeches of the generals, these commands help to portray the coming destruction as it is set in motion   Most of these commands introduce Yahweh's speeches to his council:

> 4:5   Declare in Judah and proclaim in Jerusalem, . . .
> 4:16   Warn [this nation], announce in Jerusalem
> 5:1   Run . . . through the streets of Jerusalem . . .search her
>   squares to see if you can find a man . . . who does justice
> 5:10   Go up through her vine-rows and destroy
> 5:20   Declare this in the house of Jacob, proclaim it in Judah
> 6:6   Hew down her trees;
>   cast up a siege mound against Jerusalem.
> 6:9   Glean thoroughly as a vine the remnant of Israel

Obviously, these commands not only to initiate Yahweh's speech, but also the dramatic action of the passage.

The addresses to the people all begin with rhetorical techniques as well.   Notice the use of commands and question, and also a vocative:

> 4:5-6 Blow (m.pl.) the trumpet through the land . . . flee for safety,
> 5:21   Hear this, O foolish and senseless people.
> 5:22   Do you (m. pl.) not fear me? Yahweh's word

6:16   Stand (m. pl.) by the roads . . . and ask for the ancient paths
6:17   Give heed (m. pl.) to the sound of the trumpet
6:20   To what purpose does frankincense come to me from Sheba?

The appeals to Lady Jerusalem also employ the introductory rhetorical techniques. To initiate speech to her the speakers use vocatives, commands and questions.

4:14   O Jerusalem, wash your (f. s.) heart from wickedness,
       that you may be saved.
4:30   And you (f. s.), O desolate one,
       what do you mean that you dress in scarlet . . .
       that you enlarge your eyes with paint?
5:7   How can I pardon you (f. s.)?
6:26   O my darling people, gird on sackcloth, and roll in ashes.[5]

When special audiences are addressed, the speaker usually names them with an introductory vocative. But notice that all of these use other emphatic techniques as well:

5:14   Behold (הנה), I am bringing upon you a nation from afar,
       O House of Israel.
6:1   Flee for safety, O people of Benjamin,
       from the midst of Jerusalem
6:18   Therefore hear, O nations, and know, O congregation . . .
       Hear O earth, behold (הנה), I am bringing evil on this people.

If these speeches, to the people, Jerusalem, and others, are taken as dramatic, then it can be seen how the certain of rhetorical introductions serve the dramatic purpose of revealing the hearers of the speeches. Vocatives directly name the hearers, and commands reveal at least their sex and number.

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[5] Three of these verses (4:14, 15, 6:26) will later be treated as conclusive. The reason they are treated as introductory here is that they indicate the beginning of individual speeches. It turns out that these individual speeches are used to conclude units.

Exclamations are the least helpful for identifying the audience. However, they usually introduce descriptive passages in which the content of the speech is more important than the situation (i.e., the relation of speaker and audience). The most widely used exclamation in Jer 4-6 is the particle *hinneh* (הנה: "Behold"):[6]

4:13 Behold, he comes up like clouds,
     his chariots like the whirlwind.
5:14 Behold, I am making my words in your mouth a fire.
5:15 Behold, I am bringing upon you a nation from afar.
6:19 Hear, O earth, behold I am bringing evil on this people.[7]
6:21 Behold I will lay before this people stumbling blocks.[8]
6:22 Behold, a people is coming from the north country.

Each use of *hinneh* introduces a dramatic scene of destruction.

Another introductory exclamation important to the passage is less commonly recognized. The exclamatory, or asseverative, use of *kiy* (כי), which may be translated "indeed" or "surely," is often mistaken for the more common causal use of *kiy*, translated "for" or

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[6] "Behold" is the translation of older or more literal versions like KJB and RSV (used here). These translations make hinneh easy to identify though it may give readers the false impression that it is a command or that it has something to do with sight. Many modern translators and grammarians object to renderings like "behold". They class hinneh as a "presentative exclamation" (Waltke 675) and render its exclamatory nature with adverbs stressing immediacy or "here-and-now-ness" (Lambdin 168). Although these modern alternatives may be more correct syntactically, they also have the negative effect of obscuring a rhetorical device important for identifying the beginning of units. The modern translators might respond that they make up for this rhetorical loss by indicating the beginning of the unit with a break in the text. Thomas O. Lambdin, *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1971). Bruce K. Waltke and M. O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1990).

[7] This verse shows the awkwardness that comes from translating הנה with a verb of sight.

[8] Three of the passages (5:14, 6:19, 6:21) introduce individual speeches but conclude units.

"because."[9]   However, the causal understanding does not make sense in contexts like 4:22. In this verse, the *kiy* begins Yahweh's response to the distressed cries of Lady Jerusalem (4:19-21): "כִּי my people are foolish, they know me not."   Here, it can hardly be translated as "For" or "Because" (the people's foolishness is not the *cause* of the lament); instead, it must be treated as an exclamation and translated "Indeed" or "Surely." (Still, no matter how it is translated, Yahweh's speech is a strange response.)   This kind of exclamatory use of *kiy* serves as an introductory technique elsewhere in the passage

4:15   [Indeed] a voice declares from Dan,
        and proclaims evil from Mount Ephriam.
4:31   [Indeed] it is the cry of [Lady] Zion gasping for breath.
5:26   [Indeed] wicked men are found among my people.
6:6   [Indeed] thus says Yahweh of Hosts: Hew down her trees . . .
6:13   [Indeed] from the least to the greatest of them, everyone is
        greedy for unjust gain.[10]

Translating *kiy* as "indeed" allows it function as a speech introduction.   However, it also suggests that *kiy* indicates at least a loose link with preceding speech (i.e., it affirms it); this may be correct as well.

Two Rhetorical Techniques Of Ancient Hebrew

Up to this point, the rhetorical techniques discussed have been universal syntactical devices.   Commands, questions, addresses, and exclamations are used to catch attention in modern English just as

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[9] For a treatment of the asseverative, or emphatic, use of כִּי see Waltke and O'Connor, 657, 665.

[10] The RSV translation (edited here) translates כִּי as "For" in all of these passages.   In modern dynamic translations like the NIV there is often no one English word that renders the כִּי.   Although this may be appropriate syntactically, it has the negative effect of removing a rhetorical device which indicates the beginning of unit.

they were in ancient Hebrew. Along with these universal techniques, there are a few emphatic devices which are peculiar to Hebrew poetry. Two of these are prominent in Jer 4-6: the clausal adverb *kiy* (כִּי: "for") and the prophetic formula *ne'um Yahweh* (נְאֻם יְהוָה: "Yahweh's word"[11]). Both of these emphatic techniques perform introductory and conclusive functions in Jer 4-6

Kiy. The use of the asseverative *kiy* ("indeed") as an introductory exclamation has been discussed above. In that use, the particle can stand as an independent interjection rather than indicating the relationship between parts of the discourse. In its more common use as a subordinating conjunction or clausal adverb, *kiy* serves to relate a clause to it context.[12] Often the *kiy* indicates that the clause is causal (i.e., it indicates the cause of what it modifies), but there is a growing awareness that it can also mark a clause as emphatic. Thus Muilenburg can write that *kiy* is "most frequently employed as a word of motivation [or cause]" but also that its "emphatic nature is almost always present."[13] These statements suggest that it can perform both functions simultaneously, and its occurrences in Jer 4-6 confirm this

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[11] This is my own translation. It takes into account that נְאֻם is a not a finite verb. It also is meant to suggest the formula's emphatic function (suggested below) by using a form that suggests an oath ("upon my word") in English. For an in-depth analysis of נְאֻם יְהוָה see Samuel Meier, *Speaking of Speaking* (New York: E J Brill, 1992).

[12] For treatment of כִּי as a clausal adverb see Waltke and O'Connor, 665.

[13] "The Linguistic and Rhetorical Usages of the Particle כִּי in the Old Testament," *Hebrew Union College Annual* vol. 32 (1961): 150. Similarly, Waltke and O'Connor advise, "The two clausal uses [of *kiy:* i.e., causal and emphatic] should not be too strictly separated." (665).

suggestion: clauses marked by *kiy* are often both causal and emphatic.

In Jer 4-6, the primary use of *kiy* clauses in introductions is to reveal the motivation of the introductory commands. Some of them follow commands instructing the people to prepare for invasion:

4:5-6 Blow the trumpet . . . Raise a standard . . .
   flee for safety, stay not
   for (כִּי) I bring evil from the north and great destruction.
6:1 Flee for safety . . .Blow the trumpet . . .raise a signal
   For (כִּי) evil looms out of the north, and great destruction.

Each of these reveals the coming invasion as the reason for the commands. Others go a step further and explain the reason for the invasion:

4:16-17 Warn [this nation: behold!]
   announce to Jerusalem: besiegers come from a distant land,
   . . . For (כִּי) she has rebelled against me.
5:10-11 Go up through the vineyard and destroy . . .
   strip away her branches,
   for (כִּי) they are not Yahweh's.
   For (כִּי) the house of Israel and the house of Judah
      have been utterly faithless to me.

In all of these cases the *kiy clause* concludes the introduction by revealing the reason for the dramatic commands.

In the position following introductory commands, a *kiy clause* can be compared to a thesis sentence of an essay which comes at the end of an introductory paragraph. Like the thesis sentence, the *kiy clause* not only reveals the purpose of the introduction, it also introduces the theme of the whole speech. This can be demonstrated by it use in Jer 4-6. All of the speeches in which a *kiy clause* reveals coming invasion (5:6, 6:1, 25) continue on about the invasion (5:7-8,

6:2-5, 26). Those speeches in which a *kiy clause* reveals sin as the reason for the invasion continue on about the sin of the people (4:17, 5:12-13).

Another use of *kiy clauses* in the Jer 4-6 is in laments. Often they reveal the reason for the introductory exclamations of woe:

>   4:19f My anguish, my anguish I writhe in pain!
>   . . .for (כִּי) I hear the sound of the trumpet, the alarm of war.
>   4:13 Woe to us, for (כִּי) we are ruined!
>   4:31 Woe is me! [for (כִּי)] I am fainting before murderers.
>   6:26 O [my darling] people, grid on sackcloth, roll in ashes,
>   . . .for (כִּי) suddenly the destroyer will come upon us.

The last example was slightly different because it revealed the reason for commands rather than exclamations. Two other *kiy clauses* in lament contexts offer another variation.

>   4:8 For this (עַל־זֹאת) gird you with sackcloth, lament and wail:
>   that (כִּי) the fierce anger of Yahweh has not turned back
>   4:28 For this (עַל־זֹאת) the earth shall mourn
>   and the heavens above be black:
>   that (כִּי) I have spoken, I have purposed;
>   I have not relented, nor will I turn back.[14]

In these examples, the function of *kiy* is not causal but nominative: the clause it introduces functions as a noun. As one scholar explains it, "the kiy clause unfolds the content of the *zo't* (זֹאת: "this")."[15] However, although these clauses have a different syntactical function

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[14] All of these laments will later be treated as part of unit conclusions. The reason they are being considered in this section on introductions is each lament is a separate speech with its own introduction.

[15] A. Schoors "The Particle כִּי," *Oudtestamentische Studiën* 21 (1981), 261. Schoors is commenting on Psa 41:12. He cites as other examples Psa 42:5, 55:10, and Job 13:16. Other examples of עַל־זֹאת pointing ahead to a כִּי clause are Jer 2:13 and Mic 1:8.

from the others, they have the same rhetorical function: to emphatically state the main point.

Ne'um Yahweh. The formula *ne'um Yahweh* (נְאֻם יְהוה: "Yahweh's word") can be said to function in a similar way. Until recently the function of the formula was only dimly perceived. It was often said to mark speech as divine speech, but this interpretation could not explain why it usually occurs in a medial position, and in speeches could be clearly identified as Yahweh's speech with out the formula. Two recent studies point to a better understanding. H. Van Dyke Parunak wrote:

> [*Ne'um Yahweh*] is a marker of . . . "focus": a highly local high-lighting of a clause or phrase that merits the recipient's special attention. It sets off the clause or phrase with which it is associated from the context, as though it were printed in italics or boldface type.[16]

Paul Noble's apparently independent finding is similar:

> The n'm formulas function as "attention markers" . . . It can give a saying special emphasis; in such cases the n'm formula is essentially equivalent to "And mark my words!"[17]

The view expressed by Parunak and Noble, that *ne'um Yahweh* functions to emphasize the important section or point of a passage, certainly fits with its occurrences in Jer 4-6.

Like *kiy*, the *ne'um Yahweh* formula is often used to emphasize the fact of judgment or the reason for judgment. However, while

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[16] "Some Discourse Functions of Prophetic Quotation Formulas in Jeremiah," in *Biblical and Hebrew Discourse Linguistics*, ed. Robert D. Bergen, (Dallas: Summer Institute of Linguistics, 1994), 511.

[17] "The Function of N'm Yhwh in Amos," *ZAW* 108, no. 4 (1996), 623.

kiy occurs at the beginning of the clause it modifies, *ne'um Yahweh* comes at the end:

5:15 Behold (הנה) I am bringing upon you a nation from afar,
     O house of Israel, [Yahweh's word].
5:11 For (כי) the house of Israel and the house of Judah
     have been utterly faithless to me, [Yahweh's word].
4:17 Because (כי) she has rebelled against me. [Yahweh's word].

It is significant that each one of these occurrences of *ne'um Yahweh* is with a passage already marked for emphasis with another emphatic technique.[18]

The similarities between *kiy* and *ne'um Yahweh* are summarized in Muilenburg's observations about *kiy* which apply equally well to *ne'um Yahweh*. He concluded about *kiy*:

> that it is characteristically associated with emphatic words or clauses, that it frequently appears in a strategic position in the poem or narrative whether at the beginning or the end, and that it often confirms or underlines what has been said, or at times undergirds the whole utterance and gives point to it.[19]

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[18] One special use of נאם יהוה is in the short eschatological prose passages that occur throughout the book. In these passages נאם יהוה is usually bound to an introductory temporal formula:

4:9 In that day, [Yahweh's word], courage shall fail both king and princes.
5:18 But even in those days, [Yahweh's word],I will not make a full end.

Like נאם יהוה, the temporal formulas "in those days", "in that day", and "at that time" are formulas peculiar to prophetic speech. They occur at the beginning of the short eschatological prose passages. Thus נאם יהוה in these contexts may be taken as introductory.

[19] "Usage of כי," 150.

For these reasons, both *kiy* and *ne'um Yahweh* can be taken as emphatic, and thus can be used as rhetorical techniques. Their emphatic nature that makes them useful for introductions, as seen above, and for conclusions, as will be seen below.

Conclusive Rhetorical Techniques

The universal rhetorical devices used for introductions are also used for conclusions. Because the introductions and conclusions of speeches both call for special emphasis, commands, questions, exclamations, and addresses are all more likely to be found at the beginnings and ends of speeches than the middles. In introductions, the emphasis is used to catch the attention of the audience and direct it to the subject of the speech. In conclusions, the emphasis is used to drill the point of the speech into the emotions, judgment, and will of the audience.

These purposes are well met with the rhetorical techniques of conclusive commands and questions. Concluding with a command or appeal leaves the audience with something they should do:

4:8 For this gird you with sackcloth, lament and wail.
4:14a O Jerusalem, wash your heart from wickedness.
6:8 Be warned, O Jerusalem, lest I be alienated from you.
6:26 O my darling people, gird on sackcloth, roll in ashes . . .

Concluding with a question leaves the audience with something to ponder:

4:14b How long shall your evil thoughts lodge within you?
4:30 And you, O desolate one,
    what do you mean that you dress in scarlet . . .
    that you enlarge your eyes with paint?

5:9, 29   Shall I not punish them for these things?
          [Yahweh's word[20]]
          Shall I not avenge myself on a nation such as this?
5:31   But what will you do when the end comes?
6:14   Were they ashamed when they committed abomination?

Whether conclusive questions and commands are literal or not, their form alone adds emphasis which is called for by a conclusion.

The conclusive passages listed above use a number of vocatives for their conclusive effect: O Jerusalem, O my darling people, O desolate one. The vocatives help to press home the point to the audience by showing its personal implications. This effect is obvious in 6:23:

They ride upon horses, set in array as a man for battle,
     against you, O [Lady] Zion!

In this passage the vocative comes as a surprising blow.

Related to the conclusive use of a vocative is the conclusive use of the direct address. Several times in Jer 4-6 a passage ends with a surprising shift to second-person addresses. In 4:5-7 there has been no mention of (or address to) Jerusalem until the final bi-colon:

to make your (2 f. s.) land a waste;
     your (2 f. s.) cities will be ruins without inhabitant.

Similarly, in 4:16-18 Jerusalem has been referred to in the third person as "she" and "her" until the last verse:

Your (2 f. s.) ways and your doings have brought this upon you,
This is your doom, and it is bitter;

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[20] Notice this conclusive use of the emphatic formula נאם יהוה. It also occurs between two questions in 5:22:

Do you not fear me? [Yahweh's word]
Do you not tremble before me?

These questions may be considered the conclusion of the introduction that begins in 5:20.

[for (כִּי)] it has reached you very heart.

Other passages end with a surprising address to a second masculine plural audience:

5:25   Your (2 m. pl.) iniquities have turned these against you,
       Your sins have kept good from you.
5:31b My people love to have it so
       but what will you (2 m. pl.) do when the end comes?

In previous studies these shifts in audience were sometimes taken to indicate a fragmentary text, but now they can be understood as emphatic rhetorical techniques intended to press the point home to the audience.

A Rhetorical Ploy

The conclusive use of vocatives and personal addresses can be viewed not only as a isolated emphatic technique but as part of a larger rhetorical ploy which gives whole speeches their structure. A concise example of Jeremiah using this rhetorical ploy is found in Jer 5:30-31:

An appalling and horrible thing
    has happened in the land:
the prophets prophesy falsely,
    and the priests rule at their direction;
my people love to have it so,
    but what will you (2 m. pl.) do when the end comes?

The common people (i.e., not the prophets and priest) are presumably the audience addressed in the final line. The first line catches their attention; they want to know what the "appalling and horrible thing" is. In second line, they are relieved to find it is their leaders who have sinned. Then the final line reveals the real message, the

people, and in the final colon, they are addressed directly (in the 2 m. pl.) with a troubling question.

This ploy of delaying the unpleasant message until the end has been well described by Jack Lundbom. He observes that Jeremiah's argument consistently moves from ironic to straightforward, figurative to literal, general to specific, abstract to concrete, and distant to close.[21] The explanation of this phenomenon is rhetorical: the speaker wishes to engage the audience on neutral ground before revealing the offensive message. If a speaker began with a direct statement of the guilt of his audience, their defenses would immediately go up and the rest of the speech would fall on deaf ears. Well known examples of this ploy are Nathan's confrontation of David (II Sam 12) and Amos' condemnation of the people of Israel (Amos 1-2). In both cases, the accusation of the audience is left until last. The rhetorical effect of Nathan's "You are the man!" is similar to the effect of Jeremiah's "They ride . . . against you, Lady Zion!" or "What will you do when the end comes?"

The conclusive use of vocatives and direct addresses is an example of the movement Lundbom observed from distant to close, but there are also instances in Jer 4-6 of the movement he observed from dramatic to literal. The most obvious of these is the movement from dramatic introduction to causal *kiy clause* mentioned above. In almost every case, the *kiy clause* concludes a dramatization of the coming judgment with a baldly literal statement of the nature or cause of the judgment. There is an interesting correlation between

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[21]Jack R. Lundbom, Jeremiah: *A Study in Ancient Hebrew Rhetoric* SBL Dissertation Series 18 (Missoula: Scholars Press, 1975), 116.

this small scale movement from dramatic to literal and the larger movement between Jeremiah's visions and symbolic actions and their explanations. This is a link between the poetry and prose of Jeremiah that has received little notice.

Discussion: Rhetoric And Drama

It has now been shown how Jer 4-6 employs rhetorical speech techniques at the beginnings and ends of units to:
- catch the attention of the audience (e.g., introductory commands)
- direct their attention to the subject (e.g., *kiy clauses*)
- keep them engaged in the speech (e.g., delaying the offensive)
- press the point home to them (e.g., conclusive vocatives).

For unit division, the observation of these techniques promises to be helpful for locating the beginning and ends of units. However, the presence of these rhetorical techniques in Jer 4-6 presents a problem for the dramatic reading of the passage. In the introduction of this section on rhetorical techniques it was said that the techniques are usually found in either every-day speech or in public oratory, however, this paper has argued that as dramatic speech Jer 4-6 should not be read as a reports of actual speeches, whether they are reports of every-day speech (e.g., conversations between Jeremiah and God or the people) or of formal oratory (e.g., public sermons). Does the presence of these rhetorical techniques rule out the dramatic reading?

The answer is no: rhetorical techniques are just as common in dramatic speech as in actual speech, whether everyday or formal - in fact, they are probably more common in dramatic speech. The rea-

son for this is that dramatic speech has strong ties with both everyday conversation and formal oratory. On the one hand, drama is a mimetic art like painting or sculpture, and just as painting and sculpture represent physical objects, drama represents actual speech. On the other hand, like rhetoric, drama is a prepared speech, and both speakers and dramatists carefully craft their works to elicit certain responses from their audiences.

Because drama often simultaneously imitates actual speech and is also carefully crafted, the techniques it uses often function at more than one level. Take for example the dramatic line "Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears."[22] On one level, the dramatic speaker, Mark Antony, intends this address to catch the attention and secure the goodwill of his Roman audience. These intentions are rhetorical. On another level, the actual author, William Shakespeare, intends this line to portray Mark Anthony speaking. This intention can be called literary. An analysis of dramatic speech must deal with both levels of intention.

Up to this point, only the rhetorical intentions of the dramatic characters have been discussed. Now the literary intentions of author, or dramatic poet, can be discussed as well. The first intention of the dramatic poet is to represent actual speech - but not to deceive the audience. In an actual play, the fact that the actors are on a stage is enough to keep the audience from being fooled. In dramatic poetry, the verse form of the speech often performs this function: the readers know that actual speakers do not often con-

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[22] *Julius Caesar*, III ii.

verse in iambic pentameter or formal parallelism.[23] A second intention of the dramatic poet is to portray the dramatic situation. In a play or movie, much of the situation is visually apparent to the audience, but in dramatic poetry the speeches must suggest their speakers, hearers, settings, and motivations. A skillful poet can suggest the dramatic situation quickly and naturally. For example, Browning's line "That's my last Duchess painted on the wall" immediately conjures up the situation of a Duke (speaker) pointing out a mural (setting) to someone who has not see it before (audience).[24] A third purpose of the dramatic poet is to signal when one speech ends and another begins. In a play or even a radio drama, the listener can hear the voices change, but the reader of dramatic poetry needs other clues.

Now it can be shown how the needs of the dramatic poetry are fulfilled with the introductory and conclusive techniques discussed above. First, since these techniques occur introduce and conclude many types of actual speech, they are useful for imitating actual speech. Second, these techniques function well to reveal the dramatic setting. Vocatives directly name the audience. Commands and questions imply speaker and audience, and usually suggest the relationship between them. For example, "Let us go up and attack them at noon" portrays a general (speaker) giving battle plans (setting) to other soldiers (audience). Exclamations can portray the agitation of

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[23] Barbara Hernstein Smith writes, "Meter is the stage of the theater in which the poem, the representation of an act of speech is performed." *Poetic Closure* (Chicago: Univeristy of Chicago Press, 1968).

[24] "My Last Duchess," Line 1.

the speaker or the situation. Third, these techniques which are associated with introductions and conclusions in actual speech help to suggest introductions and conclusions in actual speech. Finally, they may have an indirect rhetorical effect on the audience. For example, a question that one dramatic character asks another may cause the audience to ponder, or the exclamation of a dramatic character may catch the attention of the audience. For all these reasons, the rhetorical techniques commonly employed in actual speech are also employed frequently - probably, more frequently - in dramatic speech.

Conclusion of Rhetorical Techniques:
Utility for Unit Division

To conclude this section on rhetorical techniques, it can be demonstrated how they function to identify units. The lament of Lady Jerusalem (4:19-21) provides a good example of a speech whose beginning and end are marked by rhetorical techniques:

> My womb, my womb, I writhe in pain! Oh the walls of my heart!
> My heart groans to me, I cannot keep silent.
> For I hear the sound of the trumpet, the alarm of war.
> Disaster follows hard on disaster, the whole land is laid waste.
> Suddenly my tents are destroyed, my curtains in a moment.
> How long must I see the standard, and hear the sound of war?

The exclamations in the first line catch the attention and can be recognized as introductory. The *kiy clause* ("For I hear . . .") closes the introduction by giving the reason for the exclamations and announcing the theme. The two lines of indicative observations develop the theme and thus form the "body" of the speech. The last line

concludes the speech by bringing the elements of a speech to a point and intensifying the effect with an unanswerable question.

The other unit divisions marked by rhetorical devices will be summarized at the end of the chapter. But first, some other conclusive techniques need to be discussed.

Other Conclusive Techniques

Although rhetorical techniques account for almost all of the introductions in the passage there are several other kinds of conclusions. These can be classified as poetic climaxes, emotional clinchers, narrative resolutions, and logical judgments.

The two poetic climaxes both conclude their passages by breaking a sequence of anaphora (i.e., lines with similar beginnings). In 4:23-26, each verse begins "I looked . . . and lo," and continues with a scene of destruction. In 5:17-18, each sentence begins with "They shall eat up . . ." and continues with something valuable that the enemy will consume. Curiously, both passages climax with a reference to cities being destroyed.

> 4:26 . . . and all its cities were in ruins,
>   before Yahweh, before his fierce anger.

> 5:17 . . . your fortified cities in which you trust
>   they shall destroy with the sword.

This may seem an inappropriate climax to lists that include the heavens and earth, and sons and daughters; however, it should probably be taken to indicate just how much the security of the people depended on their fortified cities. Other passages in which the destruction of cities seems to function as a sort of local climax include 4:7, 29, and 9:11.

Another type of conclusions is the emotional clincher, or appeal to the emotions. In Jer 4-6, these endings all follow passages that have already been identified as conclusive. They underline the point of these conclusions with a dramatic scene designed to elicit pathos. For example they dramatize the effect of bad news with a lament:

> 4:8 For this reason gird you with sackcloth lament and wail:
> that (כי) Yahweh's fierce anger has not turned back from us.

> 4:28 For this the earth shall mourn and the heavens be black:
> that (כי) . . . I have purposed; . . . nor will I turn back.

> 6:24 We have heard the report of it, our hands fall helpless;
> anguish has taken hold of us, pain as of a woman in travail.

> 6:26 O my darling people, gird on sackcloth, roll in ashes . . .
> For (כי) suddenly the destroyer will come upon us.

Notice the emphatic use of *kiy* in these conclusions. Other emotional clinchers underline the point of the passage with a disturbing scene-- or perhaps more accurately, a disturbing sound:

> 4:15 [Yes] a voice (קול) declares from Dan
> and proclaims evil from Mount Ephriam.

> 4:31 [Yes, it is] the cry (קול) of a woman in travail . . .
> The cry of Lady Zion gasping for breath . . .
> Woe is me! I am fainting before murderers.

The battle commands of the enemy generals (6:4-5) may also serve a conclusive function as a "frightening sound." Because these clinchers function to press home the point to the audience, they might be called rhetorical. However, it is worth noting that several of them are the speech of a new speaker (4:8, 6:4, 6:24, 6:26 and perhaps 4:22 and 31). This indicates that they cannot be intended as rhetorical conclusions by the speakers of the speeches they follow (i.e., Jeremiah or Yahweh). The only person who could have intended

these emotional scenes as dramatic conclusions is a dramatic poet who created both the dramatic speech and the emotional response.

A related clincher is Yahweh's rebuff of Lady Jerusalem's lament (4:19-22):

> Yes my people are foolish, they know me not;
> They are stupid children, they have no understanding.
> They are skilled in doing evil, but do not know how to do good.

This response is so unexpected that the reader wonders if it actually belongs with the lament before it. But the close parallel with the lament and rebuff in 10:19-22 suggests that the rebuff belongs with the lament. Yahweh's cold response closes the passage with a jolt.

Another type of conclusion is narrative resolution. Readers know that when the conflicts or tensions in a plot are resolved, the story is about to end. For example, the identification of the murderer signals the end of a mystery, and marriage marks the end of a romance. The three-part sequence introduction-complication-resolution provides a convenient frame for describing narrative structure. The following passages fit this sequence:

> 6:4-5 The generals plan a noon attack.
> Noon passes with no attack.
> So they decide to attack at night.

> 5:3-4 Jeremiah finds the people rebellious.
> He wonders if the great are guilty, so he goes to them.
> But he finds out they are all guilty.

> 4:9-12 God declares disaster is coming.
> Jeremiah protests they haven't been warned.
> But then, Jeremiah himself warns that disaster is coming.

> 6:9-11 Jeremiah must warn the people.
> No one will listen.
> So he is full of divine wrath, and God tells him to pour it out.

6:27-30   God appoints Jeremiah to appraise the people.
Jeremiah observes the futility of refining them.
Thus he reports they are worthless.

Notice that none of these conclusions would be recognized as a conclusion if it stood alone; each is only conclusive as part of a narrative structure.

The last type of conclusion to be considered is the logical or legal judgment.   This usually consists of two related parts: a summary of evidence and an evaluation or judgment.   In Jer 4-6 the summary is often achieved with a demonstrative pronoun:

5:9&29 Shall I not punish them for these (אלה) things?
and shall I not avenge myself on a nation such as this (זה)?

4:18   Your ways and doings have brought these (אלה) upon you
This (זאת) is your doom, and it is bitter; it has reached your heart.

5:13b Thus (כה) it shall be done to them.

5:25 Your iniquities have turned these (אלה) things away
and your sins have kept good from you

5:31 My people love to have it so (כן)

Notice that each of these passages not only sum up the preceding material but also make an evaluation of it.   In a similar way judgments introduced with the word *laken* (לכן: "therefore") sum up the preceding material and make an evaluation.   Translating *laken* "on account of this" or "this being so" makes evident the demonstrative "this" (the כן in על־כן) that sums up the previous material.

5:6   Therefore a lion from the forest shall slay them,
a wolf from the desert shall destroy them.
because (כי) their sins are many, their apostasies great.

5:14 Therefore thus says Yahweh, God of hosts . . .
Behold, I am making my words in you mouth a fire
and this people wood, and the fire shall devour them.

6:15 Therefore they shall fall among those who fall;
at the time I punish them they shall be overthrown

6:18-19 Therefore, hear O nations and know O congregation . . .
Behold, I am bringing evil upon this people . . .
Because (כי) they have not given heed to my words . . .

6:21 Therefore thus says Yahweh,
Behold, I will lay before this people stumbling blocks . . .
father and son together, friend and neighbor shall perish.

Two things deserve notice in these judgments. First, two of them (5:6, 6:18-19) make use of the emphatic-causal *kiy clause* as a conclusive device.[25] Second, they have a variety of relations to their preceding material in terms of speaker. In the first, Jeremiah concludes his own speech; in the next two, Yahweh responds dramatically to Jeremiah's speech; and in the last, Yahweh concludes his own speech. This variety casts doubt on the old form-critical assessment that the judgment was the divine speech to which the prophet added his own introduction.

A related type of conclusion is the pronouncement. It concludes a passage by underlining the point with an authoritative declaration. It occurs in Jer 4-6 after passages describing punishment:

4:27 [Indeed] thus says Yahweh, "The whole land shall be
a desolation, yet I will not make a full end."

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[25] The emphatic/causal כי clause is employed conclusively in the pronouncement in 6:12 and the laments in 4:8, 28, 31, 6:24, 26.

6:12   Their houses shall be turned over to others . . .
       For (כִּי) I will stretch out my hands against
       the inhabitants of the land - oracle of Yahweh.

Notice that both of these make use of both a *kiy* and an authority formula for emphasis.

Conclusion: Unit Divisions

At this point, Jer 4-6 can be broken into units with the help of the introductory and conclusive devices observed in this chapter. The chart below shows how almost every unit in the passage is introduced or concluded with one of the devices.   However, the focus given to them in this chapter and the fact that they only criteria for division presented in the chart should not be taken to indicate that they were the sole means of locating unit divisions.   The unit division presented in the chart were decided on the basis of many factors in the content, form, and context of the units (not a mechanical application of a rhetorical method).   The emphatic devices were not the decisive factor in many of the decisions.   What is remarkable about them is that they were in contributing factor in almost every case (and the chart shows this).

In the chart, each shift from a conclusion to an introduction is taken as a break between units which is indicated with a double space.   The speakers of the verses appear to the left of the reference. (Four verses have been assigned to Yahweh on the basis of the structural analysis (4:7, 18; 5:2, 23-25).   In each case, the verse is preceded by another Yahweh speech which does not have a strong enough conclusion to indicate that Yahweh has stopped speaking.)   To

the right is the evaluation of designation of introduction or conclusion and the rhetorical evidence for the decision.

Chart 2: Unit Divisions With Rhetorical Evidence

Yah	4:5-6	Intro: Commands, כי
Yah	4:7	Concl: Address
Jer	4:8	Concl: Emotional, Lament, Command, כי
Yah	4:9	Intro: Temporal formula, נאם (prose)
Jer	4:10	Intro: Exclamation, Vocative (prose)
Jer	4:11-12	Concl: Narrative, Emphatic עתה (prose)
Jer	4:13	Intro: Exclamation
(Yah)	4:14	Concl: Vocative, Command, Question
(Jer)	4:15	Concl: Emotional, Exclamation, כי
Yah	4:16-17	Intro: Commands, נאם, כי
Yah	4:18	Concl: Summary, Address, כי
MsJ	4:19	Intro: Exclamations, כי
MsJ	4:21	Concl: Question
Yah	4:22	Concl: Emotional, Rebuff, Exclamatory כי
Jer	4:23	Intro: (anaphora)
Jer	4:26	Concl: Poetic Climax, (anaphora)
Yah	4:27	Concl: Pronouncement, Exclamatory כי
Yah	4:28	Concl: Emotional, Lament, כי
(Jer)	4:29	Intro?: Vivid Picture
(Yah)	4:30	Concl: Vocative, Question
Jer	4:31	Concl: Emotional, Lament, Exclamatory כי, כי

Yah	5:1	Intro: Commands
Jer	5:3	Intro: Vocative, Question
Jer	5:5	Concl: Narrative
Jer	5:6	Concl: Judgment, כי
Yah	5:7	Intro: Question
Yah	5:9	Concl: Summary, Questions, נאם
Yah	5:10-11	Intro: Commands, נאם כי
Jer	5:12	Intro?
Jer	5:13	Concl: Judgment
Yah	5:14	Concl: Judgment, Exclamation
Yah	5:15	Intro: Exclamation, Vocative, נאם
Yah	5:17	Concl: Poetic Climax (anaphora)
Yah	5:18	Intro: Temporal Formula, נאם (prose)
Yah	5:19	Concl: Explanation (prose)
Yah	5:20-22	Intro: Commands, Vocative, Questions, נאם
Yah	5:25	Concl: Summary, Address
Yah	5:26	Intro: Exclamatory כי
Yah	5:29	Concl: Summary, Questions, נאם
Yah	5:30	Intro?: Suspense?
Yah	5:31	Concl: Judgment, Question, Address
(Jer)	6:1	Intro: Commands, Vocative, כי
Gen	6:4	Concl: Emotional, Narrative, Commands
Yah	6:6	Intro: Exclamation, Commands
Yah	6:8	Concl: Command, Vocative

Yah	6:9	Intro:	Commands
Jer	6:10	Intro:	Question
Yah	6:11	Concl:	Narrative, Command, כי
Yah	6:12	Concl:	Pronouncement, נאמ,כי
Jer	6:13	Intro:	Exclamatory כי
Jer	6:15a	Concl:	Question
Yah	6:15b	Concl:	Judgment
Yah	6:16-17	Intro:	Commands
Yah	6:18-19	Concl:	Judgment, Exclamation, כי
Yah	6:20	Intro:	Question
Yah	6:21	Concl:	Judgment, Exclamation
Yah	6:22	Intro:	Exclamation
Yah	6:23	Concl:	Vocative
Jer	6:24	Concl:	Emotional, Lament
Jer	6:26	Concl:	Emotional, Lament, Vocative, Command, כי
Yah	6:27	Intro?:	Address
Jer	6:28	Intro?:	Vivid Picture?
Jer	6:30	Concl:	Narrative, כי

CHAPTER 5

UNIT AND SECTION RELATIONS

Three Types Of Unit Relations

Jeremiah 4:5-6:30 has now been broken down into twenty-three basic units primarily on the basis of dramatic speakers and rhetorical introductions and conclusions. Now the constructive task of grouping the units into sections can proceed by observing the relationships between the units. For this constructive task, the dramatic and rhetorical approaches provide new structural possibilities just as they did for the analytical task. The dramatic approach suggests that the units can be related by narrative progression, and the rhetorical approach suggests that units can be bracketed into sections by introductions and conclusions. The following description of units relations in Jer 4-6 will begin with narrative progression, move on to logical connections, and end with introductions and conclusions.

Narrative Progressions

The relationship of units by narrative progression is well illustrated by 5:1-6 and 7-9. In the first unit, God commands a search for righteous individuals in Jerusalem that might allow him to pardon (סלח) her. Then Jeremiah conducts a search but finds that all her inhabitants, great and poor, are rebellious. Thus when the following unit begins "How can I pardon (סלח) you?" it is an obvious

resumption of the search story. The second unit gives further evidence of the people's sin and concludes with a rhetorical question which implies that the people will receive punishment, not pardon.

Another type of narrative progression from one unit to another is the movement from declaration of punishment to description of punishment. This is well illustrated by the progression from 5:10-14 to 5:15-17. The first unit concludes with the judgment: "Therefore . . . behold I am making my words a fire in your mouth, and this people wood; and the fire will devour (אכל) them" (5:14). The following unit describes how a foreign nation will come and devour (אכל) Israel's harvest and food, devour their sons and daughters, devour their flocks and herds, and devour their vines and fig trees. Thus the description of invasion in the second unit is an obvious fulfillment of the judgment in the first unit. Other interesting connections between these units are the use of the term house of Israel (בית ישראל), and the way that both the judgment and the description begin with the word "Behold" (הנה). A similar progression from judgment declared to judgment delivered links 6:20-21 and 22-26. Again both the initial judgment and the description begin with the word "behold."

A third kind of natural progression takes the judgment one step further: from the description of disaster to the response to disaster. This relationship has already been observed several times on the small scale between speeches which portray disaster and laments (4:13, 31, 6:24, 26). But this relationship exists not only between sub-units, but between whole units. The unit 4:16-18 begins with messengers being commissioned to announce invasion to Jerusalem.

It continues with a picture of the invaders encircling the city, and concludes with a direct address to the city saying that her sin has brought this disaster on her. The following unit, 6:19-22, presents the distressed cries of the city as the disaster overwhelms her. The link between the disaster and the response is strengthened by the recurrence of the word heart (לב). The first unit concludes with the assertion "Your doom . . . has reached your very heart (לבך)" (4:18) This is echoed in Lady Jerusalem's cry: "O the walls of my heart (לבי). My heart (לבי) groans to me; I cannot silence it" (4:19).

Logical Connections

While this first group of related units all showed a narrative or temporal progression (as well as thematic an verbal ties), the second group are logically related. In each of these unit pairings, the second unit begins the with the asseverative *kiy* (כי: "Indeed"). In the previous discussion of this use of *kiy*, it was said to differ from the more common causal use of *kiy* because it was used as an introduction and seemed to modify not a clause but a whole speech. However, it can now be asked whether this use of the asseverative *kiy* could indicate a pivot (like "therefore": לכן) or at any rate a weak division. The speeches introduced by this use of *kiy* all seem to show some relationship to what precedes them. The relationship could be described as one of affirmation and substantiation. Translating *kiy* "Yes. In fact . . ." (a modern dynamic equivalent of "Indeed") would fit in each of it uses in Jer 4-6: it is an appropriate beginning for a

new speech but also suggests the affirmative, substantiating relationship with the preceding speech.

Three pairs of units in Jer 4-6 are related with an asseverative *kiy*. The unit 5:26-29, introduced by *kiy*, backs up the indictment of sin at the indictment at the end of the previous unit (5:20-25) with further evidence of the people's sin. Similarly, 6:13-15 affirms the judgment of "the inhabitants of the land" (6:12) by asserting that all the inhabitants "from the least to the greatest" are swindlers and liars. The relationship of the third pair is somewhat different. The first unit in the pair (6:1-5) ends with the dramatic presentation of the enemy generals commanding a siege of Jerusalem. To this the second unit (6:6-8) responds:

> Yes. In fact (כי) this is what Yahweh has said:
> Hew down her trees, cast up a siege mound against Jerusalem
> This is the city which must be punished.

Thus the second unit supports the portrayal of the attack by revealing its source as Yahweh's anger toward the sinful city.

Rhetorical Introduction and Conclusions

So far the relations suggested have been between contiguous units. Now another way of grouping units can be considered. It arises from the circumstance that in some units the introduction takes up almost the whole unit while in others the conclusion dominates. This suggests that these units are actually introductory and conclusive units.

The introduction of 4:5-7 takes up the first two verses of the unit with no less than seven introductory commands. The third

verse is a description of invasions whose only claim to being conclusive is a second person address. In any case, the introduction overpowers the conclusion, and it seems likely that it is intended to introduce more than just the unit.

Opposite this introductory unit, 4:13-15 seems to be predominantly conclusive. It has a weak introduction (*hinneh* with a description of invasion) then gives two verses to a conclusive vocative, a conclusive appeal, a conclusive question, and an emotional clincher. Thus it would serve as a fitting conclusion not just of the unit 4:13-15 but the whole section 4:5-15. A possible confirmation of the conclusive role of 4:13-15 is the recurrence in the last line of the paired verbs "declare" and "proclaim" (הגיד and השמיע) which also occur as a pair at the beginning of the unit in 4:5.[1] This may be an inclusio which concludes the speech with a dramatic reminder of its introduction.

A similar pair of introductory and conclusive units bracket 4:16-31. Again, the introduction of the first unit (4:16-18) overshadows its weak conclusion. Likewise in 4:29-31 there are multiple conclusive devices but no clear introduction. Also the last unit closes with a reminder of the first unit: the picture of Lady Zion fainting before murderers (4:31) is reminiscent of Jerusalem surrounded by besiegers in the introduction (4:16-17).

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[1] The only other occurrence of this pair in the Hebrew Bible is in Jer 5:20.

Section Identification

At this point. most of the principle sections of Jer 4:5-6:30 can be seen. In the following chart the brackets represent sections that have been observed. The unit descriptions are meant to show the relationships between the units (not to characterize the individual contents of the units).

Chart 3: Units Grouped by Section

4:5-8   Introduction

4:9-12

4:13-15 Conclusion

4:16-18   Introduction: Disaster

4:19-22 Response to Disaster

4:23-28

4:29-31 Conclusion

5:1-6   Search for people to pardon

5:7-9 None to pardon

5:10-14 הנה Judgment pronounced

5:15-17 הנה Judgment described

5:18-19

5:20-25 Sin stated

5:26-29 כי Sin substantiated

5:30-31

6:1-5   Siege portrayed

6:6-8 כי Siege substantiated

6:9-12   Entire population judged

6:13-15 כי Entire population guilty

6:16-19

6:20-21 הנה Judgment pronounced

6:22-26 הנה Judgment described

6:27-30

Left-Over Units

Before going on to discuss the relationships between the eight
sections identified here, a few comments can be made on the units
that have not been connected. 6:16-19 will be shown to be con-
nected with 6:20-26 in the following discussion, but the other five
units (4:9-12, 23-28, 5:18-19, 30-31, 6: 27-30) exhibit only tenuous
connections with their contexts. Interestingly, previous interpreters
have judged all five of these passages to be later additions to the
passage.

The analysis here seems to confirm that they are cut from a
different cloth. 4:9-12 and 5:18-19 are both examples of the short
apocalyptic prose sayings which are scattered throughout the book.
The apocalyptic vision of the return to chaos, 4:23-28, is usually
judged to be late on the basis of its content. It does sit awkwardly in
passage that describes the historical destruction of Jerusalem rather

than the end of the world. 5:30-31 is described by William Holladay as "a fragment apparently added secondarily"[2] and it does seem slightly out of place between the strong conclusion of 5:29 and the strong introduction of 5:30. Finally, 6:27-20 with its description of the failure of the people to be refined may serve as a kind of summary judgment on the whole of chapters 4-6, or even 2-6. It's reference to Jeremiah's vocation as a tester of the people reminds the reader of Jeremiah's call in chapter 1. Thus it may serve as a kind of inclusion rounding off a major section of the book. However, though reasons can be suggested for the position of each of these five units, they seem to participate in Jer 4-6 as local additions rather than as part of the primary structure of the passage.

Section Relations I:

Similarity of Dramatic Presentations

Examining the eight major sections identified above yields an important discovery: six of the sections are introduced by clusters of commands addressed to the divine council (4:5-15, 16-31, 5:1-9, 10-18, 19-29, 6:9-12). This cannot be a coincidence, and it demands an explanation. Explanations will be offered below both in terms of the rhetorical purpose and the dramatic portrayal. First the evidence must be refined and given additional support.

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[2] *Jeremiah* 1, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1986), 133

The Two Dissimilar Sections

Closer examination will show that the two sections not introduced with an address to the divine council (6:1-8, 15-26) have introductions which are related to the introductions of the other six sections. To start with, like the other six, both of them are introduced with a cluster of commands that function rhetorically to catch attention. Other connections can be observed by examining the contents of the two units.

The introduction of 6:5 warns the people of Benjamin who are living in Jerusalem. Scholars have often noted the close verbal parallels between this warning and the warning the messengers of the council are commanded to deliver in 4:5-6. They both command the people to flee for safety (הָעִזוּ), blow the trumpet (תִּקְעוּ שׁוֹפָר), and raise a signal (שְׂאוּ־נֵס in 4:6 and שְׂאוּ מַשְׂאֵת in 6:1). Both of them end by revealing the reason for the warning with a causal *kiy* clause: evil (רָעָה) and great destruction (שֶׁבֶר גָּדוֹל) are coming from the north (מִצָּפוֹן). The only significant difference is that while the warning in 4:5-6 is *nested in* a speech to a messenger, the warning in 6:1 *is itself* the speech of a messenger.

Before going on, this is an appropriate place to address the question of who the speaker (the messenger) in 6:1-3 is. Given the close parallels in of 6:1 with 4:5-6 it might be suggested that the speaker is a messenger of the divine council. However, there are no contextual clues to prepare the reader for this unusual speaker (as there are for the speeches of the generals and Lady Jerusalem). In this situation, it is safest to suggest one of the primary speakers:

Yahweh or Jeremiah. In light of the way Jeremiah often responds to the commands directed to the divine council (5:3-6, 11-12, 6:10-11) it seems likely that he is the speaker--he is in a sense a messenger of the divine council. That the speech is addressed to the people of Benjamin, Jeremiah's tribe, strengthens the case for Jeremiah as the speaker.

The other section that does not begin with an address to the divine council is 6:16-26. This section is made up of three units (16-19, 20-21, 22-26) of which only the second two have been shown to be connected. However, the third unit is a good candidate for a conclusive unit. In fact, it has several similarities to the two units already described as conclusive (4:13-15 and 29-31). It begins with a description of judgment which is followed by a direct warning to Lady Jerusalem (6:25, in the 2 f. s.), and an emotional clincher in the form of a lament. If 6:22-26 is the conclusion, then 20-21 could be the body, and 16-19 the introduction.

If 6:16-19 is the section introduction, it fits in well with the six introductions addressed to the divine council. The second half of the 616-19 is a verdict directly addressed to the members of the divine council: Therefore . . . hear O nations, and know O congregation . . . Hear O earth . . ." (18-19). If this verdict is addressed to the council, it is likely that the evidence (presented as a conversation between Yahweh and the people) is addressed to the divine council as well. Thus although the audience is not clearly revealed until 6:18, this section 6:16-26 begins in the divine council just like the other six sections.

Holladay's Concurring Thesis

The division of this passage into eight major sections each of which begins with a cluster of commands receives surprising support from the observations of William Holladay. He found that for dividing the passage into structural units "the most satisfactory procedure is to find the clusters of imperatives or prohibitions the beginnings of respective units; one concludes then that 4:5, 5:1, 5:10, 5:20, 6:1, 6:9, 6:16 . . . will mark beginnings."[3] This indicates that Holladay discovered the same structural feature and the same section breaks. (The reason Holladay omitted 4:15 will be explored below.)

No other significant study besides Holladay's has reached this conclusion about the sections of Jer 4-6. Four reasons can be given to explain how Holladay was able to perceive these sections. First, Holladay understood the dramatic nature of the passage. Second, this enabled him to see the divine council as the audience of the imperative clusters. Third, he had a conservative estimate of the integrity of the text and expected to find unifying principles rather than disorder. Fourth, his association with the rhetorical method of Muilenburg allowed him to see the importance of rhetorical techniques like commands.

Unfortunately, Holladay's important observation has not been widely accepted. In part, this may reflect the continued effects of a historical approach to the text that is not tempered by the literary sensitivity and conservatism of Holladay. In part, this may be due to

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[3] Ibid.

scholarly exasperation with Holladay's methodology. Again and again, he suggests poetic parallels, rhetorical techniques, and historical possibilities which, although they are impossible to disprove, are not possible to conclusively prove either. In the case of Jer 4-6, although Holladay cites "the charting of the patterns of imperatives" as a turning point in his study of the structure of Jer 4-6, he does not fully explain the process that led up to that point. The few hints he gives about his process[4] together with his general statement of methodology[5] suggest that he read and reread the passage looking especially for repetitions and parallel passages. Observation of these recurrences as well as other indicators such as changes in theme, speaker, and situation led him to observe unit breaks. He then noticed that most of these units began with imperatives.

Hopefully, this study will give Holladay's observation a firmer foundation. Here the passage was divided primarily on the basis of universal rhetorical techniques (not hypothetical techniques apparent only to ancient Hebrews). Then the units were linked on the basis of obvious narrative and logical connections. In this way, the sections were built from the ground up. Finally, once the outlines of the sections were already fairly clear, a similarity was observed: all of the sections begin with commands and most of these are directed to the divine council. Now these section divisions will be given further support, and finally, explanations for the introductory commands will be given.

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[4] He only hints at the process in an end-note, *The Architecture of Jeremiah 1-20* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University, 1976), 179, n. 21.

[5] Ibid., 20f.

Additional Support for Section Divisions

The fact that this study based its unit divisions on what were said to be universally recognized rhetorical techniques opens up a unique method of proving--or disproving--the unit divisions. If the introductory techniques really have a universal function, then they should work as well today as they did in Jeremiah's time. Competent readers in all times should be able to perceive (at least intuitively) when a new unit is begun by a introductory technique.

Fortunately for this study, the judgments and intuitions of many of today's competent readers are codified by the unit divisions indicated in the texts of modern translations and commentaries. A survey of these texts can show whether these readers take as introductory the eight section introductions identified above as beginning units in Jer 4:5-6:30.[6] In the chart below, the unit divisions are taken from five modern versions (Revised Standard Version, New King James Version, New International Version, New English Bible, and Jerusalem Bible) and five commentators (John Bright, J. A. Thompson, Carroll, William Holladay, and William McKane). On the chart, an "X" represents that the version or commentator has indicated a unit break before the imperative in question.

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[6]Those identified as beginning sub-units or speeches cannot be so easily evaluated as breaks between sub-units are not usually indicates.

Chart 4: Support for Section Divisions

Impv	RSV	NKJV	NIV	NEB	JB	Bri	Tho	Car	Hol	McK
4:5	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
4:16										
5:1	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
5:10	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	
5:20	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
6:1	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
6:9	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
6:16	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Overall, it is obvious that these readers have taken the imperatives as introductory.[7]

Still, the failure of the interpreters to mark 4:16 as an introduction must be explained if it is to be kept as an introduction. If the imperatives in 4:16 are introductory, it is especially surprising that Holladay, who treats the introductory imperatives as the key to structure, did not recognize them It seems his primary reason for omitting 4:16 from his scheme is his understanding of the relationship between 4:16 and the preceding verse. His translation reads:

> 4:15 Yes, a voice (קוֹל) declares from Dan
> and announces bane from Mount Ephriam:

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[7]Two factors may have influenced the division of units beside the perception, intuitive or conscious, that imperatives begin units. First is that the interpreters may have been influenced by each other or earlier interpreters (in particular those responsible for the chapter breaks at 5:1 and 6:1). Second, they may have made their decisions on the basis of other factors in the text. In the first case, it remains significant that someone at some point divided it there, and that other intelligent readers assented. In the second case, the other factors make the unit divisions stronger and thus strengthen the case for the imperative beginning a new unit.

4:16a "Proclaim to the nations, 'Right this way'
announce it over Jerusalem."

His use of the colon at the end of 4:15 and the quotation mark at the beginning of 4:16, indicate that Holladay understands 4:16a as what is "declared" or "announced" by the voice in 4:15. Quotation marks introducing 4:16 in Bright, the NIV, and the NJKV indicate the same understanding. Thus although all these readers *do* recognize 4:16 as the beginning of a speech, they do not indicate a division before the speech because they regard 4:15 to refer to it.

It is not necessary that 4:15 refers to 4:16. Throughout the book of Jeremiah, there a several references to cry or shout (קוֹל: *qôl*) being heard without the content following as a quote.[8] A good example is found in 3:15 which reads: "A voice (קוֹל) on the bare heights is heard/ weeping and pleading of Israel's' sons" The quotation in the following verse, "Return O faithless sons, and I will heal your faithlessness," is clearly not a quotation of the sons of Israel, but of God. It is also significant that these *qôl* verses often conclude units.[9] As was observed in the last chapter, the conclusive use of a pathetic voice (as in 3:15) or a frightening voice (as in 4:15) functions rhetorically as an emotional clincher. This conclusive function of 4:15 has been reinforced by the observation that it forms an inclusio with 5:4. Thus the failure of the modern interpreters to indicate a

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[8] Voice (קוֹל) heard but not quoted: 3:21, 25:36, 30:5, 31:15. Admittedly, there are a few occurrences of קוֹל which are followed by quotes: 4:31, 9:19. In 8:19 the quote seems to precede the reference to the voice.

[9] Conclusive verses using קוֹל: 3:21, 4:31, 9:19, 10:22.

division before 4:16 may be the result of misunderstanding the function of 4:15, and thus does not rule out the division.

Explanation of Introductory Commands

The dramatic reading and rhetorical analysis (i.e., determining units by rhetorical introductions and conclusions) have been useful in identifying and defending the section divisions. Now they can be used to explain why the sections begin with commands to the divine council. This problem can be broken down into two questions: why do the sections begin with commands? and why are they addressed to the divine council?

From the rhetorical perspective, the reason the sections begin with commands is that commands make good introductions. They combine the rhetorical functions of the other introductory techniques. Grammatically, their emphatic, disjunctive nature works like exclamation, and their second person reference (explicit in Hebrew, implicit in English) works like a vocative. Functionally, their demand for response (literal or otherwise) works like a rhetorical question.

From the dramatic perspective, these commands must function on two levels. On one level, Yahweh (a principal character) uses them to address the divine council (other characters). On another level, the dramatic poet intends these commands to help portray a dramatic situation for the reader. Commands are more suited to this dramatic purpose than questions or statements because they more often require the identification of speaker and addressee to be understood. A command causes the reader to ask, "Who is addressing whom?" and this is the basic question of dramatic poetry.

The way the dramatic poet of Jer 4-6 answers this question for his readers has been described in the chapter on identifying dramatic speakers. To summarize the evidence, the divine council was shown to be the audience by the second-masculine-plural form of the commands (which ruled out Jeremiah) and because the commands were addressed to messengers, searchers, and destroyers (which ruled out the people). Yahweh was shown to be the speaker by a variety of contextual clues (e.g., the speaker was sinned against by the nation, and declared judgment on the nation); additionally it is presumably only Yahweh who has the divine council at his command.

This identification of speaker and audience raises the second question: why do the main sections of Jer 4-5 begin with Yahweh addressing the divine council. In the traditional reading, which regards Jer 4-6 as a collection of Jeremiah's speeches to the people of Judah, this phenomenon is hard to explain. Why would Jeremiah routinely begin his public speeches by addressing the divine council in the voice of Yahweh? In a dramatic reading, this kind of address is not unusual; but rather, expected. The dramatic poet uses these addresses to create the dramatic scene of Yahweh addressing the hosts of heaven and earth in his council. The recurrence of this situation at the beginning of each major section is part of the dramatic method or scheme.

The dramatic scheme of Jer 4-6 can be described as a series of divine initiatives whose consequences are played out on earth. The sections all begin with Yahweh's command to his council. Then they proceed with a portrayal of the command being fulfilled, or a reaction to the command by the people or Jeremiah, or a consideration of

the cause of the command. This scheme can be compared to waves breaking on the shore. Each section begins with the divine imperative which is like a wave on the ocean full of ominous potential. The section ends when the effects of the imperative have been played out on earth like a wave expending its force on the shore.

This technique of presenting a story as a series of divine initiatives and their consequences is common in biblical literature. An example would be the story of the plagues (Ex 7-12) in which each section begins with God's command to Moses, and continues on with Moses's execution of the command, Pharaoh's response, and the end result: the plague. A similar sequence is the six-day creation account in which each day relates God's command and its consequences (notice the hint of the council context in the second plural references in Gen 1:26). Examples can also be found in the parables of Jesus. In one a king send out messengers to invite people to a wedding feast. When the messengers are abused and murdered, the king sends out his troops to destroy the murderers and burn their city. He then sends out more messengers to invite others (Mat. 22:1-14). In another parable, the owner of a vineyard who has left it in the hands tenants, sends a series of servants to the vineyard to get his fruit, but the wicked tenants beat and killed the servants. When the owner sends his son, they kill him too (Mat. 21: 33-41). These stories obviously sum up the story of the Deuteronomistic history: Yahweh sends the people judges, kings, and prophets, but the responses of the people only incur God's wrath. These stories share not only a narrative scheme but also an underlying theological per-

spective. Both the narrative scheme and the theological perspective are operative in Jer 4-6.

Section Relations II:

Narrative Progression Of Recurrences

The idea of a narrative scheme implies that the eight sections Jer 4-6 are not only similar in their dramatic presentation, but that they may be related in a temporal sequence or chronological order. To investigate this possibility, a look at some additional evidence will be useful. Up to this point, the analysis of the passage has drawn on the identification of dramatic speakers and audiences, and of rhetorical introductory and conclusive techniques. A third feature of the text relevant to structure is a group of intriguing verbal and thematic recurrences. These recurrences in chapters 4-6 often continue on into chapters 8-10. They include the gleaning imagery, the refining imagery, and of course references to the foe from the north.

William Holladay, who has a keen eye for recurrences, has observed these recurrences and many more. Characteristically he reads them as evidence of both a complex redactional history and a complex literary structure. On the basis of the recurrences, he believes the seven sections are arranged in an A B C D A' C' B' pattern--a kind of chiasm with a twist.

Holladay's proposal has several weaknesses. First, some of the recurrences he suggests seem to be too subtle for normal human beings to perceive. Second, his theory of several redactional levels raises questions about the levels on which the structural devices operate. It is possible that the structures of the early levels may

have been obscured. Finally, even if he can show complex structure to exist, the important question remains what is its significance for interpretation? This question must be asked for each of the perceived recurrences: If A' recalls A, what is the purpose or intended effect? The following discussion will examine four important recurrences in the light of this question and the related question: is there a temporal sequence in the passage?

Punishment Refrain

The first and most obvious recurrence is the refrain which is repeated verbatim in 4:9, 29, and 9:9:

> Shall I not punish them for these things? [Yahweh's word]
> And shall I not avenge myself on a nation such as this?

Each of the three occurrences conclude a section describing the sins of the nation: their adultery (5:7-8); their neglect of the needy (5:26-29); and their deceitfulness (9:(3-)8). The effect of each of the three passages reaching an identical conclusion is to give added validity to the conclusion. Since the conclusion is posed as a question, it could be said that if the answer was not obvious the first time, it will probably be obvious by the second time, and surely by the third time. The two recurrences may also recall the first occurrence which concluded the unit about the failed search of Jerusalem for righteous individuals(5:1-9). Thus the failure of the search is reemphasized, underlining the judgment that no pardon is possible. Although these recurrences have an accumulating effect, there seems to be no temporal progression between them, instead each one returns to the original conclusion.

Lady Jerusalem's Cries

A second set of recurrences is the two cries of Lady Jerusalem. The close similarities between these passages were pointed out in the chapter on dramatic speakers, but now an important difference can also be observed. The first occurrence (4:19-21) seems to be the cry of Jerusalem at the very time of the attack:

[My womb, my womb!] I writhe [as in birth pangs].
Oh, the walls of my heart!
    My heart groans to me;
You have heard, O my soul, the sound of the trumpet,
    the alarm of war.
Disaster follows hard on disaster,
    the whole land is laid waste.
Suddenly my tents are destroyed,
    my curtains in a moment.
How long must I see the standard,
    and hear the sound of the trumpet?

Notice the new situation in the second occurrence (10:19-20):

Woe is me because of my hurt!
    My wound is grievous.
But I said, truly this is my affliction,
    and I must bear it.
My tent is destroyed,
    and all my cords are broken;
My children have all gone from me,
    and they are not;
there is no one to spread my tent again,
    and to set up my curtains.

In the second occurrence the attack is over: Lady Jerusalem is wounded, her tents have been torn down, and her children have been taken away. Thus although the second passage obviously recalls the first passage, the emphasis is not on the similarity of the

situations but on the difference. The two passages are clearly intended to show two parts of the same story: the attack and its aftermath. The relationship is definitely one of temporal progression.

Gleaning the Vineyard

A third set of recurrences consists of passages which use the imagery of a vineyard. There are many interpretative difficulties with these passages, but the relationship between them can still be seen:

> 5:10 Go up through her vineyards and destroy,
>   but make not a full end;
> Strip away her tendrils, for they are not Yahweh's.

> 6:9 [Go ahead] glean as a vine the remnant of Israel;
> Like a grape gatherer pass your hand again over its branches.

> 8:13 When I would gather them, Yahweh's word,
>   there are no grapes on the vine, nor figs on the fig tree,
>   even the leaves are withered.

No matter how the gleaning imagery is understood, it can still be seen that the first verse represents a first pass through the vineyard: "do not make a full end."[10] The second verse represents a second pass ("pass your hand again(שוב)") to gather what was left the first time (the "remnant" (שארית)). Holladay refers to this second pass as a "mopping up process"[11] and the Rabbinic commentator Rashi

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[10] Notice the sense that a narrative reading makes of this phrase. Previous studies interpreted the line (or the word "not" (אל) as a historical correction in view of the incomplete captivity. See Bright *Jeremiah,* vol. 21 of *The Anchor Bible* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1965), 39-40.

[11] Holladay, Jeremiah 1, 213.

remarks that the image is of gleaning the higher branches for what was missed in the first picking.[12]   The third verse laments the futility of making a further pass.   Again there is a temporal sequence between the recurrences.

Approach of the Foe

The fourth set of recurrences all have to do with the advancing foe.   The similarities between 4:5-6 and 6:1 have already been pointed out.   But these verses also show similarities with 4:16-17 and 8:14:

> 4:5-6 Declare in Judah, and proclaim (השמיעו) in Jerusalem:
>   Blow the trumpet through the land, cry aloud and say,
>   Assemble let us go into the fortified cities (ערי המבצר).
>   Raise a standard toward Zion, flee for safety, stay not
>   For I bring evil from the north and great destruction.

> 4:15-16 Warn the nation: "Look!"   Proclaim (השמיעו) to Jerusalem:
>   "Besiegers come from a distant land;
>   They shout against the cites of Judah."
>   Like keepers of a field they are against her round about.
>   For she has rebelled against me.

> 6:1 Flee for safety, O people of Benjamin,
>   from the midst of Jerusalem!
>   Blow the trumpet in Tekoa, raise a signal on Beth-haccherem
>   For evil looms out of the north and great destruction

> 8:14 Why do we sit still?
>   Gather together, let us go into the fortified cities (ערי המבצר)
>   and perish there;
>   for Yahweh our God has doomed us to perish.

All of these are section introductions consisting of a series of com-
mands to prepare for invasion and a causal *kiy* clause which explains

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[12] Cited by McKane, 145.

the commands. Although these four passages are strongly related, each one has its own perspective. The first instructs the people to gather in Jerusalem because evil is coming from the north. In the second, the besiegers enter the land and gather around Jerusalem. In the third, the people of Benjamin are advised to flee Jerusalem (reversing the previous instructions) and head for cities further south. Jerusalem is no longer safe. In the last section, even these fortified cities offer no protection. Further preparations are now pointless; the people are resigned to die because Yahweh has decreed it.

Along with these recurrent introductory passages about the invasion, there are also recurrent conclusive passages about the invasion. Each of these has three main parts: A) a description of the enemy rapidly approaching; B) a direct address to Lady Jerusalem (once, to the people); C) an emotional clincher, or pathetic sound. 4:13-15 concludes 4:4-15:

A) Behold, he comes up like clouds,
   his chariots like the whirlwind;
 his horses (סוסיו) are swifter than eagles--
   woe to us, for we are ruined!
B) O Jerusalem, wash your heart from wickedness,
   that you may be saved.
 How long will your evil thoughts lodge within you?
C) Yes a voice (קול) declares from Dan,
   and proclaims evil from Mount Ephriam.

4:29-31 concludes 4:16-31:

A) At the noise (קול) of horseman (פרש) and archer
   every city takes to flight;
 they enter into thickets, they climb among rocks;
 all the cities (עיר) are forsaken, and no man dwells in them.

B) And you, O desolate one,
    what do you mean that you dress in scarlet . . .
        that you enlarge your eyes with paint?
In vain you beautify yourself.
    Your lovers despise you; they seek your life
C) Yes, it is the cry (קול) of a woman in travail,
    anguish as one bringing forth her first child,
the cry (קול) of the daughter of Zion gasping for breath . . .
    "Woe is me! I am fainting before murderers."

6:22-26 concludes 6:16-26:

A) Behold, a people is coming from the north country . . .
    They lay hold on bow and spear . . .
they ride upon horses (סוסים) . . . against you, O Lady Zion!
We have heard the report of it, and our hands fall helpless . . .
B) Go not forth (f. s.) into the field, nor walk in the road;
    for the enemy has a sword, terror is on every side.
C) O my darling people, gird on sackcloth, roll in ashes;
    make mourning as for an only son, most bitter lamentation;
        for suddenly the destroyer will come upon us.

8:16-19a concludes 8:14-19a:

A) The snorting of their horses (סוסיו) is heard from Dan;
    at the sound (קול) of the neighing of their stallions
        the whole land quakes.
They come and devour the land and all that fills it,
    the city (העיר) and those who dwell in it.
B) For behold I am sending among you serpents,
    adders which cannot be charmed, and they shall bite you.
C) "My grief is beyond healing, my heart is sick with in me."
Hark the cry (קול) of my darling people
    from [a distant land].[13]

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[13]The common translation of מארץ מרהקמ as "from the length and breadth of the land" goes against the plain sense of the text to avoid the reference to the exile. The translation is McKane's *Jeremiah* vol. 1 (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1986), 195. Also note that the section division given here takes the cry of the people in 8:19a to refer to the lament in v. 18 rather than the questions in 8:19b.

These conclusions have some obvious verbal recurrences: horses (סוס) and cities (עיר) in part A and cries (קול) in part C; but the strongest connection between them is the recurring A B C sequence. The reasons for this conclusive sequence were given in the last chapter in terms of the effectiveness of conclusive addresses and emotional clinchers. However, the degree of similarity between these conclusions demands a more complete explanation than the effectiveness of the conclusion.

Although these conclusions exhibit a high degree of similarity, a closer look will reveal a progression or intensification. This is most evident when the parts of the A B C sequence are compared one at a time. In the A sections, the northern invaders are pictured first setting out (4:13), then overrunning the cities (4:29), then reaching Zion (6:22-24), and finally having devoured the city and the land (8:16). The B sections addressed Lady Jerusalem begin with an appeal for repentance (4:14), and then a mocking question ridiculing Jerusalem for seducing her murderers (4:30). In the last two B sections, Jerusalem is warned that the city is surrounded(6:25) and then told that "serpents" are being sent in (8:17). The C sections present the invasion in a series of dramatic sounds (קול). First is the sound of the attack in the north (4:16), then the Lady Zion's cries surrounded by the besiegers (4:31), then a further lament that the destroyer will soon attack (6:26), and finally the cry of the people in exile (8:18-19a). Thus in the four conclusions the time for repentance passes and the destruction passes from threat to reality.

Before leaving these conclusions the question of the speakers in 4:14-15, 4:29, and 4:17 needs to be addressed. The speakers of these

verses are the last and most difficult to be identified. However, the recurrence of the A B C sequence provides a possible solution. The speakers of the B and C parts of 4:29-31 have been identified as Yahweh and Jeremiah respectively on the basis of the degree of sympathy with Lady Zion's plight. The speaker of the A part of 4:13-15 has been identified with Jeremiah on the basis of the lament. If the similar parts have the same speakers then Jeremiah can be assigned the A parts,[14] Yahweh the B, and Jeremiah the C. To support this three-speech solution, it can be noted that there are ample shifts and introductory devices to indicate that the three parts of each conclusion have different speakers. This solution must be held lightly, and it is worth noting that the identity of the speakers in these passages does not carry much interpretive significance.

Conclusion

It has now been shown that there is a temporal progression in Lady Jerusalem's cries, the vineyard passages, and the invasion introductions and conclusions. (The lack of temporal progression in the refrains may be intended to show that throughout the external changes the guilt of the people remains). Each of the progressions continue into chapters 8-10 where they reach their conclusions: Jerusalem has been ransacked and abandoned, the vineyard is bare, and the invaders have devoured the whole land. In previous historical studies, the indicators of this temporal progression were taken as clues for dating the composition of the material. Thus for example,

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[14] Except for the A section 6:22-26 which is marked as Yahweh's speech. This somewhat undermines the method used here.

Bright understand much of the material in 8-10 as "uttered as the Babylonians closed in upon Jerusalem" and thus dated in 598/7.[15] The alternative proposed here is that this temporal progress indicates the progression of a narrative.

The difficulty for this narrative interpretation is that although each set of recurrences seems to follow a linear progressions, all of the recurrences are combined into a tangle with no apparent pattern. The relationships of the various recurrence are summarized in the following chart:

Chart 5: Recurrences between Sections

Section 1	Invasion I (4:5-15)
Section 2	Invasion II (4:16-31) Jerusalem I (4:19-22)
Section 3	Refrain I (5:1-9)
Section 4	Vineyard I (5:10-19)
Section 5	Refrain II (5:20-31)
Section 6	Invasion III (6:1-8)
Section 7	Vineyard II (6:9-15)
Section 8	Invasion IV (6:16-26)
Chs. 8-10	Vineyard III (8:8-13)
	Invasion V (8:14-19a)
	Refrain III (9:4-9)
	Jerusalem II (10:19-21)

In terms of composition, the complexity of this arrangement may indicate that several sources have been woven together. In terms of

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[15] John Bright, *Jeremiah,* vol. 21 of *The Anchor Bible.* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1965), 73.

narrative, the arrangement means that the story is being told from several different perspectives. When one narrative line gets ahead, the author goes back and advances another line until they are finally brought to the same conclusion. Thus there is a kind of two steps forward one step back progression. The beginning and end of this progression are clear. At the beginning the northern foe sets out toward Judah (4:5-6), and at the end, Jerusalem has been destroyed and the people exiled (10:19-20). The difficulty is determining at what point other events occur--particularly the fall of Jerusalem. There seems to be no clear answer.

The reader's impression of the passage can be summed up by returning to the analogy of the waves. The original picture of the waves playing themselves out on the shore can now be developed with two additional factors: first, the tide is coming in; and second, Jerusalem, like a sand castle on the beach, is well below the high-tide mark. Although the waves surge up and fall back, and one wave may not even reach as far as the last, eventually, Jerusalem is demolished.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

The structural analysis of Jeremiah 4:-6:30 is now complete. What remains is to summarize the method, the results, and the implications for composition. This will be followed with suggestions concerning the relation of the passage to its literary context. Finally, the study will conclude with a consideration of what this new reading contributes to the meaning of the passage.

Summary

Method

The structural analysis of Jeremiah 4:5-6:30 has been accomplished by breaking the passage into literary units and describing the relationships between these units. The passage was analyzed into units on the basis of changes in speaker and audiences and the occurrence introductions and conclusions identified by emphatic devices. The twenty-three units were grouped into nine major sections on the basis of temporal (narrative), logical (legal), and functional (rhetorical) relationships between contiguous units. The nine sections were related by similarity in dramatic presentation and by sets of verbal, thematic, and structural recurrences.

Results

The results of this structural analysis can be summarized in a description of the materials of the passage. First, the passage consists of a series of relatively distinct speeches spoken primarily by Yahweh and Jeremiah but with a few spoken by Lady Jerusalem, enemy generals and perhaps the people of Judah. These speakers speak primarily among themselves and the divine council though they occasionally address the people of Judah. Second, although some speeches respond directly to others, for the most part they do not seem intended to realistically portray conversations. Instead they work together to present stylized dramatic situations. Third, these situations all seem to move from an initiative in the divine realm to its effects in the human realm. Fourth, although these situations do not follow a simple chronological order, there is an undeniable forward movement from the first stirrings of the enemy in the north (4:5-7) to the aftermath of their destruction of Judah and Jerusalem (10:19-20).

Compositional Theory

This description of the passage suggests an approach to composition that challenges both the traditional assumption of authenticity and the more recent redactional theories. In opposition to the traditional view, the fact that the passage presents a unified drama that ends with Jerusalem in ruins suggests that the drama was composed after Jerusalem was destroyed. Also, the voices of Jeremiah and Yahweh in this passage function as the voices of characters rather than sources. It may be possible that after the exile Jeremiah com-

posed a drama in which he was a character. Another possibility is that the writer of the passage relied on some of Jeremiah's actual speeches to help him represent the speech of Jeremiah (or Yahweh). However, there is little evidence for these possibilities, and what is more, no necessity.

In opposition to the redactional view, the fact that the passage presents a unified drama suggests a single dramatist. Also, the shifts in speaker and content which were previously used to indicate source divisions can now be interpreted as the intentional dramatic devices. It may be possible that an editor crafted this drama out of several literary sources. Another possibility is that the drama was supplemented by a succession of editors who worked in concert with the original dramatic design and method. However, there is little proof for these possibilities, and no necessity.[1] The analysis of the passage offered suggest that the dramatic portrayal of the destruc-

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[1] This statement should be qualified with a few observations from the structural analysis. First, it has been noted that there are a few units in the passage which have a inexact fit with the rest of the passage (4:9-12, 23-28, 5:18-19, 30-31, 6: 27-30). The rough fit may indicate that these passages were composed by a later editor or brought in from another source. Another feature of the text with a possible compositional explanation is that among the major sections there are two basic types: advancing foe sections (4:1-15, 4:16-31, 6:1-8, 6:16-26); and search and glean sections (5:1-9, 10-19, 6:9-15). One section (the "drought" section 5:20-31) does not fit well with either of these types although it has an advancing-foe introduction (5:20 "declare... and proclaim" as in 4:5 and 4:15) and a search-and-glean conclusion (5:29 "Shall I not punish" refrain like 5:9). These features might suggest that two sources have been woven together.

tion of Jerusalem is the work of a dramatist looking back on the destruction.

This new suggestion for the source of the passage is not a new attempt to explain the text in terms of the motives of a historical person (e.g., Jeremiah) or group (e.g., the Deuteronomists). Instead it is attempt to challenge this kind of reading. While the older explanations insist that the historical origin of the passage must be determined before its meaning can be understood, this study has insisted that the meaning must be understood before attempting to determine the origin.

Relation to Context

Chapters 8-10

In a literary work a passage is understood not so much in relation to its historical context as in relation to its literary context--the passages before and after it in the text. This is why a good answer to the common examination question "Why is Hamlet so cruel to Ophelia in Act II?" will not be drawn from information about Shakespeare's marriage. Instead it will be drawn from what is revealed about Hamlet and Ophelia in Acts I and II (or possibly in Acts II-V). In the same way, the most important context for Jer 4-6 is its literary context in the book of Jeremiah. Some of its relations with its immediate context, chapters 2-10, can now be suggested.

The relationships between chapters 4-6 and 8-10 have already come up in the discussion of recurrences between sections. There it was noted that five sets of recurrences which are initiated in chapters 4-6 are concluded in 8-10: the foe from the north, the gleaning

of the nation, the distress of Lady Jerusalem, the question about punishment, and the refining process. Several of these conclusions in 8-10 refer to the results of the invasion: the people are in exile (8:19), Lady Jerusalem is abandoned (10:19-20); the vineyard is totally barren (8:13). These are indications that the action described in chapters 4-6 is pictured as having run its course in 8-10.

This has important implications for the interpretation of the material in 8-10. In the traditional understanding 8-10 was a collection of additional oracles predicting the fall of Jerusalem. Because they were predictions they had to have originated before the fall. This necessitated a curious explanation of the laments in chapter 9. Instead of being true laments, they were actually predictive oracles creatively presented as what the people would say in response to the disaster they predicted. The new interpretation offered here enables a more natural reading: instead of being laments for what will happen, they are laments for what has happened. In the dramatic presentation, Jerusalem has fallen.

This understanding of 8-10 raises another intriguing possibility. The first section of chapter 10 (10:1-15) is often considered to be anomalous intrusion into the material of 8-10. The section contains a warning against idolatry and some hymnic material contrasting worthless idols to God the kingly creator. The critical judgment that it is late addition may be correct (a divergent LXX text and a doublet in 51:15-19 suggest that it has been expanded). However, the new dramatic reading of 4-10 suggests reason for its present position. If chapters 8-10 has as its background the destruction of Jerusalem and the exile of her inhabitants, 10:1-15 could be inter-

preted as a message to the exiles warning them against the idolatry in Babylon and reminding them that God is the creator and king of the nations not just Judah.

The dramatic reading of 4-10 raises an important question: why is the central event of the drama, the destruction of Jerusalem, not directly portrayed the drama. 4-6 portrays the enemy's progress from the distant north to the gates of Jerusalem. It gets as close as portraying the battle commands for the siege (6:4-5). However, the scenes in 4-6 stop without describing the actual destruction, and when the next scenes come in 8-10, the fall has already taken place: the people are fleeing the city (8:14), they are in exile (8:19, 9:19), and they are lamenting the dead (9:21-22).

A possible answer to this question is that it reveals the dramatic artistry of the writer. In a history, this omission would be a serious flaw because historians are expected to describe the most important events. In a drama the events portrayed are not chosen on the basis of importance or explanatory necessity, they are chosen because of their evocative or dramatic potential. Part of dramatic potential of a scene is its capacity to suggest what has happened or what will happen. Thus a first kiss has more dramatic potential than a wedding, a death sentence has more than an execution, and the discovery a body has more than a murder. The wedding, the execution, and the murder would all be more important in a historical account but not in a drama.

A good example of an author employing this dramatic principle occurs in <u>Of Mice and Men</u> by John Steinbeck. In a highly dramatic sequence of the story, an old farm hand kills his faithful dog to put it

out of its misery. A lesser writer might have simply described the shooting and burial. Instead Steinbeck confines his presentation to bunkhouse of the farmhands. First, the old man tells the others what he has to and rejects their offers to do it for him. Then he leaves the bunkhouse with the dog and the gun. While he is gone the others try to pass the time with a card game and casual conversation. Finally, the old man comes back without the dog and lies down on his bunk with his face to the wall. By omitting the shooting, Steinbeck achieved a pathos that would have not have been possible otherwise. A similar dramatic judgment can be seen at work in the omission of the death of Ophelia or the blinding of Oedipus. In light of this, it is no surprise that the destruction of Jerusalem also happens offstage.

Chapters 2-3 and 7

If chapters 4-10 show evidence of a temporal or narrative ordering (rather than the loose temporal order usually attributed to them), it is worth asking if this order extends back into the poetry of chapters 2-3. Traditional interpreters of these passages seemed to indicate the awareness of a such a temporal progression by a tendency to date them early in the career of Jeremiah. This tendency might simply be explained by the position of these chapters in the book, but the interpreters also relied on the references to Assyria and Egypt, pervasive idolatry, and northern kingdom of Israel. The earliest years of Jeremiah were thought to be the very latest time these references could be related to a historical situation. The dramatic analysis of Jer 4-6 offers two possibilities. First, the temporal progression could be due to an intentional narrative plan

rather than an attempt at chronological ordering or oracles. Second, the events described need not relate directly to the ministry of Jeremiah.

Reading 2-3 in this light produces an interesting possibility: the narrative seems to go back not to the beginning of Jeremiah's career, but to the beginning of the people of Israel. The narrative begins with the wilderness experience and moves directly on to the possession of the land. The rest of chapter 2 describes how the people forsook God for idols and instead of trusting him formed alliances with Assyria and then Egypt. In the imagery of Hosea, these alliances are portrayed as adultery and prostitution, and chapter 3 goes on to describes the divorce of Israel. The chapter climaxes by stating that Judah's sin is even worse than Israel's, and this leads to the pivotal calls for repentance: Israel should repent so that it can return from exile (4:1-2); Judah should repent so that it does not incur God's wrath like Israel (4:3-4). Although this interpretation answers some questions it raises many other that cannot be dealt with here. However, if it is accepted in its broad outline, it means that chapters 2-10 present a history of Israel from its beginning in the wilderness to its end at the fall of Jerusalem.

This presentation of the history of Israel as a history of persistent hard-heartedness and rebellion would be an important link with the Deuteronomistic literature which recounts this history on the large scale in the historical books from Deuteronomy to Kings and many times on a small scale in the sermons of leaders and prophets. In the present literary context, it forms an important link with the prose of chapter 7 (often referred to as the Temple Sermon). This

sermon which occurs in the drama where one might expect an
account of Jerusalem's fall makes a strong case for God's punishment
of the people. Its various arguments each sound tones sounded pre-
viously in the poetry: the combination of injustice and idolatry, the
futility of the prophet's role as intercessor and watchman, and the
misplaced trust in sacrifice. The final argument is a recounting of the
history of the Israel's history from the Exodus until the present
(7:21-26). The history relates how the people stubbornly refused to
heed God's persistent warnings. It presents in a condensed prose
account the same story that chapters 2-10 present in an expanded
poetic drama.

Contribution to Interpretation

To conclude this study it can now be asked what the new con-
ception of the nature and structure of the passage contributes to the
understanding of its meaning. This is best seen in relation to previ-
ous interpretations. In the traditional reading, chapters 4-6 are
thought to be a collection of oracles warning the nation of judgment
that was coming because of their sins. As oracles they are at the
same time the inspired words of God and the authentic word of the
prophet. Thus their message of judgment is the message of the book.

In newer redactional studies, the relocation of authorship to
the exile puts a greater significance on the meaning of the passage in
later times. The passage is thought to be shaped by exilic tradi-
tionists and preachers to serve two purposes. First, it offers an
explanation for the catastrophe. As theodicy it shows God as both in
control of events and just. Second, it servs as a warning against sin.

As an object lesson it is a powerful reminder of the consequences of sin.

In contrast to these earlier interpretations, this study approaches the passage as a poetic drama not as recorded oracles or rhetorical preaching. It is not a record of God's judgments, or a defense of God's judgments; it is a literary portrayal of God's judgment. This difference is important because in a record of God's word or a sermon promoting God's word there can be no distinction between God's perspective and the author's perspective. However, a basic principle of interpreting literature is that the perspective of the main character should not be confused with the perspective of the author. This is particularly true in a drama in which the author attempts to give each character an independent voice. If a character's voice is judged to represent the view of the author, it should not be on the basis of the author's life but on the basis of the way the character is portrayed in the text.

The overall presentation of Yahweh in the text does seem to confirm that his judgments are being presented as just. The fact that Yahweh's speech is addressed to the heavenly court, gives the impression of Yahweh's judgments meeting the approval of an impartial and all-knowing jury. A similar effect is achieved by the device of Jeremiah's failed searches. Jeremiah is the representative of the community and will share in their punishment. Thus it is highly significant that in spite of this he comes to the same conclusion as Yahweh about the people's guilt.

Still there is some reason to question a total identification of the author with Yahweh's perspective. In this regard, the analysis

given in this study has turned up some important evidence. First, a pathetic speech that has formerly been attributed to Jeremiah has now been determined to be the speech of Lady Jerusalem. Second, the laments over Jerusalem in chapter 9 were interpreted as actual laments (not oracles). Third, it was found that the speeches could be divided between Jeremiah and Yahweh on the basis of the degree of sympathy they show for Jerusalem's plight: Yahweh is unsympathetic.

The significance of these three observations can be shown by contrasting the resulting characterization of Yahweh and Jeremiah. Jeremiah has deep sympathy for his "darling people" and always seems ready to give them the benefit of the doubt. In contrast, Yahweh thinks only of justice and the violation of his laws. He is unrelenting in his determination to punish sin. Jeremiah wearies himself with trying to hold back Yahweh's wrath, but Yahweh wants to pour out "on the children in the street" (6:9-12). When the destruction comes, Jeremiah wishes that he could weep day and night for "the slain of my darling people," but Yahweh only want to get away from them (9:1-2).

Another approach to understanding Yahweh's character is by his response to the destruction of Jerusalem. The destruction is portrayed by a series of laments which seem designed to arouse the sympathy of the readers. This is especially true of those lament which portray the city as a defenseless woman. The laments reach a climax of intensity in the extended cries of Lady Jerusalem first amidst the tumult of battle (4:19-21) and then alone in the ruins (10:19-20). To both of these cries Yahweh responds with a shock-

ingly unsympathetic reproach: "My people are foolish . . . they are stupid children" (4:22). Although the author may portray Yahweh's judgments as just, he also portrays the recipient of Yahweh's judgment with some degree of sympathy

The dramatic situation of Lady Jerusalem can be compared to the situation of the villains of some of Shakespeare's comedies. Like Caliban, Malvolio, or Shylock, Lady Jerusalem is an unlovely character who needs correction. However by giving her a voice, the dramatist has given her a degree of humanity. The same is true of Shakespeare's villains, and one is reminded of Shylock's speech: "Hath not a Jew eyes?" Because of this, when the punishment has been exacted, the dominant feeling of satisfaction that justice has been done is tempered by the feeling that perhaps the foolish villain got more than was deserved. The audience is not allowed to unreservedly approve of Prospero's magic, Sir Toby's pranks, or the justice of the Venetian court. In the same way, although Lady Jerusalem is portrayed as faithless, rebellious, foolish, and stubborn, she is also pathetic. Because of this, the reader cannot give full approval to Yahweh's angry and unrelenting purpose to destroy her. When Yahweh calls the enemy hordes to come and ruin her, the reader may accept his justice but question his mercy.

This is the dramatic explanation of these features, but there may also be a theological one. Why would an author want to portray God in anything but the best light? A possible answer is suggested by the conclusion to the dramatic portrayal in 2-10

Correct me O Yahweh, but in just measure
Not in thy anger, lest thou bring me to nothing.

> Pour out thy wrath on the nations that know thee not,
>   and on the nations that call not upon thy name;
> for they have devoured Jacob;
>   they have devoured him and consumed him,
>   and have laid waste his habitation.   (10:24-25)

The narrative ends in prayer. The first part of the prayer implies what has been observed from the dramatic analysis: although the punishment inflicted by Yahweh is just, it seems excessive. In the second part, the prayer turns to a petition to right the situation by pouring out wrath on the nations that have destroyed Yahweh's people. The repeated reference to the nations "devouring Jacob" seems to recall the situation at the very beginning of the dramatic narrative. There the author portrays the early days in which:

> Jacob was holy to Yahweh, the first fruit of his harvest.
> All who ate of him became guilty; evil came upon them. (2:3)

These prayers remind Yahweh of his promises to his people and call on him to act to save them. In view of the dramatic presentation, the author seems to imply that by delivering his people whom he has almost destroyed and by punishing their destroyers he could also save his reputation.

In the chapter on introductions and conclusions it was noted that the author frequently uses the dramatic ploy, used by Nathan and Amos, of delaying the direct address of his true audience until the conclusion. In this light, it is significant that the chapters on Israel's sinful history end with a prayer of confession, that the warnings against idols end with a hymn of praise to the creator, and that the drama of Jerusalem's destruction ends with a petition for mercy and deliverance. What these endings imply is that the true audience is God. This passage has taken the prophetic speech form,

in which God addresses man, and redirected it as man's address to God. The address to God links it with the "confessions" of Jeremiah 11-20, with Lamentations, and with Psalms. Thus the passage stands as bridge between the poetry of prophecy and the poetry of prayer.

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